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THE

WORKS

OF THE

Rev. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

Late Fellow of *Lincoln-College*, OXFORD.

VOLUME XVII.

BRISTOL:

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A SECOND LETTER TO THE LORD BISHOP of *Exeter*,

In anſwer to his LORDSHIP's late LETTER.

My Lord,

IN my late letter to your Lordſhip, I uſed no ceremony. I ſuppoſe it was not expected from one who was ſo deeply injured: and, I truſt, I uſed no rudeneſs; if I did, I am ready to aſk your lordſhip's pardon.

That letter, † "related to a matter of fact publiſhed on your lordſhip's authority, which I endea-

† The Biſhop of Exeter's letter, page 2, 3.

endeavoured to falſify," and your lordſhip, now again endeavours to ſupport.

The facts alledged are, 1ſt, That I told Mrs. *Morgan* at *Mitchel*, 'You are in hell; you are 'damned already.' 2dly, 'That I aſked her to 'live upon free coſt.' 3dly, 'That ſhe de-'termined to admit no more *Methodiſts* into her 'houſe.'

At firſt I thought ſo ſilly and improbable a ſtory neither deſerved nor required a confutation: but when my friends thought otherwiſe, I called on Mrs. *Morgan*, who denied ſhe ever ſaid any ſuch thing. I wrote down her words; part of which I tranſcribed in my letter to your lordſhip, as follows:

'On *Saturday*, *Auguſt* 25, 1750, Mr. *Trem-'bath* of *Gennys*, Mr. *Hame* of *Shaftſbury*, and I, 'called at Mr. *Morgan*'s at *Mitchel*. The ſervant 'telling me her maſter was not at home, I deſired 'to ſpeak with her miſtreſs, the "honeſt, ſenſi-'ble woman." I immediately aſked, Did I ever 'tell you or your huſband, that you would be 'damned if you took any money of me? (So the 'ſtory ran in the firſt part of the compariſon: it 'has now undergone a very conſiderable altera-'tion) Or did you or he ever affirm, (another 'circumſtance related at *Truro*) that I was rude 'with your maid? She replied vehemently, Sir, 'I never ſaid you was, or that you ſaid any ſuch 'thing; and I do not ſuppoſe my huſband did: 'but we have been belied as well as our neigh-'bours.

'bours. She added, when the biſhop came down 'laſt, he ſent us word he would dine at our 'houſe; but he did not, being invited to a 'neighbouring gentleman's. He ſent for me 'thither, and ſaid, Good woman, do you know 'theſe people that go up and down? Do you 'know Mr. *Weſley?* Did not he tell you, you 'would be damned if you took any money of 'him? And did not he offer rudeneſs to your 'maid? I told him, No, my lord, he never ſaid 'any ſuch thing to me, nor to my huſband that I 'know of. He never offered any rudeneſs to 'any maid of mine. I never ſaw, or knew any 'harm by him. But a man told me once, (who, 'I was told, was a Methodiſt preacher) that I 'ſhould be damned, if I did not know my ſins 'were forgiven.'

Your lordſhip replies, † 'I neither ſent word 'that I would dine at their houſe, nor did I ſend 'for Mrs. *Morgan*; every word that paſſed be-'tween us, was at her own houſe at *Mitchel.*' I believe it; and conſequently, that the want of exactneſs in this point reſts on Mrs. *Morgan*, not on your worſhip.

Your lordſhip adds, 'The following atteſta-'tions will ſufficiently clear me from any imputa-'tion, or even ſuſpicion, of having publiſhed a 'falſhood:' I apprehend otherwiſe: to wave what is paſt, if the facts now publiſhed by your lord-ſhip, or any part of them, be not true; then

† Page 7.

certainly your lordſhip will lie under more than a 'ſuſpicion of having publiſhed a falſhood.'

The atteſtations your lordſhip produces are, 1ſt, Thoſe of your lordſhip's chancellor and archdeacon. 2dly, Thoſe of Mr. *Bennet*.

The former atteſts, that in *June*, or *July*, 1748, Mrs. *Morgan* did ſay thoſe things to your lordſhip. † I believe ſhe did, and therefore acquit your lordſhip of being the *inventor* of thoſe falſhoods.

Mr. *Bennet* avers, that in *January* laſt, Mrs. *Morgan* repeated to him what ſhe had before ſaid to your lordſhip. ‡ Probably ſhe might; having ſaid thoſe things once, I do not wonder if ſhe ſaid them again.

Nevertheleſs, before Mr. *Trembath* and Mr. *Hame* ſhe denied every word of it.

To get over this difficulty, your lordſhip publiſhes a ſecond letter from Mr. *Bennet*, wherein he ſays, 'On *March* 4th laſt, Mrs. *Morgan* ſaid, 'I was told by my ſervant, that I was wanted 'above ſtairs; where, when I came, the cham-'ber door being open, I found them (Mr. *Weſley* and others) round the table on their knees.' He adds, 'That Mrs. *Morgan* owned one cir-'cumſtance in it was true, but as to the other 'parts of Mr. *Weſley*'s letter to the biſhop, ſhe 'declares it is all falſe.'

I believe Mrs. *Morgan* did ſay this to Mr. *Bennet*,

† Page 8. ‡ Page 11.

Bennet, and that therefore neither is he *the maker of a lie*. But he is the relater of a whole train of falſhoods, and thoſe told merely for telling ſake. I was never yet in any *chamber* at Mrs. *Morgan*'s. I was never *above ſtairs* there in my life. On *Auguſt* 25, 1750, I was *below ſtairs* all the time I was in the houſe. When Mrs. *Morgan* came in, I was *ſtanding* in the large parlour; nor did any of us *kneel* while we were under the roof. This both Mr. *Trembath* and Mr. *Hame* can atteſt upon oath, whatſoever Mrs. *Morgan* may *declare* to the contrary.

But ſhe declared farther, (ſo Mr. *Bennet* writes) 'That Mr. *John Weſley*, ſome time ago, 'ſaid to a maid of her's, ſuch things as were 'not fit to be ſpoken:' † and Mr. *Morgan* declared, that he 'did or ſaid ſuch indecent 'things to the above-named maid (the ſame fact, 'I preſume, only a little embelliſhed) in his 'chamber, in the night, that ſhe immediately 'ran down ſtairs, and proteſted ſhe would not 'go near him or any of the *Methodiſts* more.'‡

To ſave trouble to your lordſhip as well as to myſelf, I will put this cauſe upon a very ſhort iſſue. If your lordſhip will only prove, that ever I lay one night in Mrs. *Morgan*'s houſe, nay, that ever I was in the town of *Mitchel* after ſun-ſet, I will confeſs the whole charge.

What your lordſhip mentions by 'the way'

 I will

† Page 11. ‡ Page 12.

I will now conſider. 'Some of *your* weſtern 'correſpondents impoſed upon the *leaders of Me-* 'thodiſm, by tranſmitting to *London* a notoriouſly 'falſe account of my charge to the clergy. Af- 'terwards the *Methodiſts* confeſſed themſelves to 'have been deceived; yet ſome time after, the '*Methodiſts* at *Cork*, in *Ireland*, your own bro- 'ther at the head of them, reprinted the ſame 'lying pamphlet, as my performance.'†

My lord, I know not who are your lordſhip's *Iriſh correſpondents:* but here are almoſt as many miſtakes as lines. For, 1. They were none of *my correſpondents* who ſent that account to *London.* 2. It was ſent not to the *leaders* of *Methodiſm*, but to one who was no *Methodiſt* at all. 3. That it was a *falſe account* I do not know. But your lordſhip may eaſily put it out of diſpute. And many have wondered, that your lordſhip did not do ſo long ago, by printing the charge in queſtion. 4. I did never confeſs, it was a *falſe account*; nor any perſon by my conſent, or with my knowledge. 5. That account was never reprinted at *Cork* at all. 6. When it was reprinted at *Dublin*, your lordſhip had not diſowned it. 7. My brother was not in *Dublin* when it was done; nor did either he or I know of it till long after.

Therefore, when my brother was aſked, 'How 'he could reprint ſuch an account, after your 'lordſhip had publicly diſowned,' I do not at all wonder,

† Page 4, 5.

wonder, that 'he did not offer a ſingle word in 'anſwer.'

Whether this, as well as my former letter be "mere rant and declamation," or plain and ſober reaſon, I muſt refer to the world and your lordſhip's own conſcience.

I am, my Lord,
Your lordſhip's moſt obedient ſervant,
Newcaſtle-upon-Tyne, JOHN WESLEY.
May 8, 1752.

A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. POTTER.

Norwich, Nov. 4, 1758.

Rev. SIR,

1. 'TILL to day I had not a ſight of your ſermon *on the pretended inſpiration of the Methodiſts*. Otherwiſe I ſhould have taken the liberty ſome days ſooner of ſending you a few lines. That ſermon, indeed, only repeats what has been often ſaid before, and as often anſwered. But as it is ſaid *again*, I believe it is my duty to anſwer it *again*. Not that I have any acquaintance

N. B. Mr. *Potter's* words are printed in *Italic*.

quaintance with Mr. *Cayley* or *Oſborn:* I never exchanged a word with either. However as you lump me and them together, I am conſtrained to ſpeak for myſelf, and once more, *to give a reaſon of my hope*, that I am clear from the charge you bring againſt me.

2. There are ſeveral aſſertions in your ſermon which need not be allowed; but they are not worth diſputing. At preſent therefore, I ſhall only ſpeak of two things. 1. Your account of the *new birth*; and, 2. *The pretended inſpiration* (as you are pleaſed to term it) *of the Methodiſts.*

3. Of the new birth, you ſay, † *The terms of being* regenerated, *of being* born again, *of being* born of God, *are often uſed to expreſs* the works *of goſpel righteouſneſs.* I cannot allow this. I know not that they are ever uſed in ſcripture, to expreſs any *outward work* at all. They always expreſs an *inward work* of the ſpirit, whereof baptiſm is the outward ſign. ‡ You add, *Their primary, peculiar, and preciſe meaning ſignifies* (a little impropriety of expreſſion) *our redemption from death and reſtoration to eternal life, through the grace of God.* It does not, unleſs by death you mean *ſin*; and by eternal life, *holineſs.* The preciſe meaning of the term is, *A new birth unto righteouſneſs*, an inward change from unholy to holy tempers. You go on: *this grace our Lord here calls, entering into the kingdom of God.* If ſo, his aſſertion is, "Except a man be born

† Pag. 10, 11. ‡ P. 13.

again — he cannot be born again." Not ſo. What he ſays is, except a man experience *this change*, he cannot enter into my kingdom.

4 You proceed: † *Our holy church doth teach us, that—by the laver of regeneration in baptiſm, we are received into the number of the children of God—this is the firſt part of the new birth.* What is the *firſt part* of the new birth? *Baptiſm?* It is the *outward ſign* of that inward and ſpiritual grace; but no *part* of it all. It is impoſſible it ſhould be. The outward ſign is no more a part of the inward grace than the body is a part of the ſoul. Or do you mean, that *regeneration* is a *part* of the new birth? Nay, this is the *whole* of it. Or is it the *laver of regeneration* which is the firſt *part* of it? That cannot be: for you ſuppoſe this to be the ſame with baptiſm.

5. *The ſecond part, the inward and ſpiritual grace, is a death unto ſin, and a new birth unto righteouſneſs.* What! Is the new birth the *ſecond part* of the new birth? I apprehend it is the firſt and ſecond part too. And ſurely nothing could have prevented your ſeeing this, but the ardor of your ſpirit, and the impetuoſity with which you ruſh along and trample down all before you. Your manner of writing reminds me of an honeſt Quaker in *Cornwall*, whoſe words I would recommend to your conſideration. Being conſulted by one of the friends, whether he ſhould publiſh a tract which he had read to many in private;

† P. 23.

vate; he replied, " What, art thou not content with laying *John Wesley* on his back, but thou must tread his guts out too?"

6. So much for your account of the *new birth*. I am, in the second place, to consider the account you give of *the pretended inspiration* (so you are pleased to term it) *of the Methodists*.

† *The Holy Ghost sat on the apostles with cloven tongues as of fire—and signs and wonders were done by their hands.* (Wonders indeed! For they healed the sick by a word, a touch, a shadow!

" They spake the dead alive, and living dead.") *But though these extraordinary operations of the Spirit have been long since withdrawn, yet the pretension to them still subsists in the confident claim of the Methodists.* This you boldly affirm, and I flatly deny. I deny, that either I, or any in connexion with me (for others, whether called *Methodists*, or any thing else, I am no more concerned to answer than you are) do now, or ever did lay any claim to *these extraordinary operations of the Spirit*.

7. But you will prove it. They ‡ *confidently and presumptuously claim a particular and immediate inspiration*. I answer, first, So do *you*, and in this very sermon, though you call it by another name. By *inspiraton*, we mean, that inward assistance of the *Holy Ghost*, which ‖ *helps our infirmities, enlightens our understanding, rectifies our will, comforts, purifies and sanctifies us*.

Now

† Pag. 16, 17, 18. ‡ Ibid. ‖ Pag. 14.

Now all this you claim as well as I; for these are your own words, "Nay, but you claim a *particular* inspiration." So do you: do not *you* expect him to sanctify *you* in *particular?* "Yes, but I look for no *immediate* inspiration." You do: you expect he will *immediately* and *directly* help your infirmities. Sometimes, it is true, he does this, by the *mediation* or intervention of other men: but at other times, particularly in private prayer, he gives that help *directly* from himself. "But is this all you mean by *particular*, *immediate* inspiration?" It is, and so I have declared a thousand times in private, in public, by every method I could devise. 'Tis pity therefore, that any should still undertake to give an account of my sentiments, without either hearing or reading what I say. Is this doing as we would be done to?

8. I answer, secondly, There is no analogy between claiming *this inspiration of the Spirit*, who you allow † *assists and will assist all true believers to the end of the world:* and claiming *those extraordinary operations* of the Spirit, which were vouchsafed to the apostles. The former, both you and I pretend to: yea, and enjoy; or we are no believers. The latter *you* do not pretend to: nor do I; nor any that are in connection with me.

9. "But you *do* pretend to them. For *you pray that signs and wonders may still be wrought in the*

† Page 18.

the name of Jesus." True: but what signs and wonders? The conversion of sinners; the *healing the broken in heart: the turning men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.* These and these only are the signs and wonders which were mentioned in that prayer. And did I not see these signs and wonders still wrought, I would sooner hew wood, or draw water, than preach the gospel. For those are to me very awful words, which our Lord speaks of *prophets* or teachers; *Ye shall know them,* (whether they are true or *false prophets*) *by their fruits: Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit—Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.* What *fruit* you have *brought forth* at *Reymerston*, I know not; God knoweth.

10. "Your followers, however, do *pretend to the grace of a miraculous conversion.*" Is there any conversion that is not *miraculous?* Is conversion a natural or *supernatural* work? I suppose all who allow there is any such thing, believe it to be supernatural. And what is the difference between a *supernatural* and a *miraculous* work I am yet to learn.

But they say, that at such a time, and in such a manner, the divine illumination shone upon them; Jesus knocked at the door of their hearts, and the Holy Ghost descended upon their souls. That is, in plain terms, raillery apart, at a particular *time*, which they cannot easily forget, God did, in so eminent a manner as they never experienced before, *enlighten their understanding* (they are your

own

own words) *comfort and purify their hearts, and give his heavenly Spirit to dwell in them.* But what has *all this* to do with *thoſe extraordinary operations of the Holy Spirit?*

11. † *Under theſe pretened impreſſions, their next advance is, to a call to preach the word themſelves; and forth they iſſue, as under the immediate inſpiration of God's Spirit, with the language of apoſtles, and zeal of martyrs, to publiſh the goſpel, as if they were among our remoteſt anceſtors, ſtrangers to the name of Chriſt.*

The plain truth is this. One in five hundred of thoſe whom God ſo *enlightens and comforts*, ſooner or later, believes it to be his duty to call other ſinners to repentance. Such an one commonly ſtifles this conviction, till he is ſo uneaſy he can ſtifle it no longer. He then conſults one or more of thoſe whom he believes to be competent judges: and under the direction of theſe, goes on, ſtep by ſtep, from a narrower to a larger ſphere of action. Mean time he endeavours to uſe only *the language of the apoſtles*, to ſpeak the things of the Spirit, in the words of the Spirit. And he longs and prays for *the zeal of martyrs*, continually finding the need thereof; ſeeing our preſent countrymen are as great ſtrangers to *the mind* that was in Chriſt, as our anceſtors were to his name.

12. *But the Holy Spirit no longer comes from heaven like a ruſhing mighty wind. It no longer appears*

† Page 20, 21.

appears in cloven tongues, as of fire. I wonder who imagines it does? *We now discern not between his suggestions and the motions of our rational nature.* Many times we do not: but at other times, God may give such peace or joy, and such love to himself and all mankind, as we are sure are not *the motions of our own nature. To say, then, that the Holy Spirit began his work at such a time, and continued it, so long in such a manner, is as vain as to account for the blowing of the wind.* Hold! *Accounting for*, is not the thing. To make a parallel, it must be, is as vain as to say, that the wind *began* to blow at *such a time*, and *continued so long* in *such a manner.* And where is the vanity of this? Why may I not say, either that the wind *began* to blow at *such a time*, and *blew so long* in *such a manner:* or that God *began* at *such a time* to comfort my soul? That he *continued* that consolation *so long?* And in *such a manner*, by giving me either peace and joy in believing, or a lively hope of the glory of God?

13. † *Not that we are without a memorable instance of this instantaneous impulse, in the sudden conversion of St.* Paul. A poor instance this; for it does not appear, that his was a *sudden* conversion. It is true, *A great light suddenly shone round about him*; but this light did not convert him. After he had seen this, *he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.* And probably, during the whole time, God was *gradually working*

† Page 23.

working in his heart, till he *arose, and* being *baptized, washed away his sins, and was filled with the Holy Ghost.*

14. But to return. † *Their teachers claim a particular and immediate inspiration in their nauseous effusions.* Certainly they *claim* either a particular *and* immediate inspiration (as above explained) or none at all. But this is no other *inspiration* (call it *influence*, if you please, though it is a far stronger term) than every one must have, before he can either understand, or preach, or live the gospel. *But there is not in scripture the least promise or encouragement to expect any particular inspiration.* Yes surely, such an inspiration as this; you have allowed it over and over. And what *external evidence* of this, would you have? I will believe, *you* are *thus inspired*, if you convert sinners to God, and if you yourself are *holy in all manner of conversation.*

15. Is there *no need of this inspiration now, because the prejudices of mankind are in favour of the gospel and the profession of it is under the protection and encouragement of the civil power? The prejudices of mankind are in favour of the gospel!* What, the prejudices of the bulk of mankind? To go no farther than *England.* Are the bulk of our nation prejudiced in favour of the genuine gospel! Of the holiness which it enjoins; of chastity and temperance; of denying ourselves, and taking up our cross daily; of dying to the world

† Page 22.

world, and devoting all our heart, and all our life to God? Are they prejudiced in favour of presenting our souls and bodies a constant, holy sacrifice to God? What less than this is gospel holiness? And are the prejudices of mankind in favour of this?

16. Likewise how far this real Christianity is *under the protection and encouragement of the civil power*, I know not But I know, *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution*, domestic persecution, if no other; for *the foes of* such *a man shall be they of his own household. There shall be*, and there are now, *five in one house, three against two, and two against three:* and that not for being *Methodists*, for having a nick-name (although that may be the *pretence*, for want of a better: for who scruples to throw a man into the ditch, and then beat him, because his cloaths are dirty?) but for *living godly*; for loving and serving God, according to the best light they have? And certainly these need the assistance of God's Spirit, to strengthen and comfort them, that they may suffer all things, rather than turn aside, in any point, from the gospel-way.

† 17. *But the scriptures are a* compleat *and a* sufficient *rule. Therefore to what purpose could any further inspiration serve? All farther inspiration is unnecessary; the supposed need of it is highly injurious to the written word. And the pretension thereto, (which must be either to explain, or to supply*

† Pag. 27, 28.

ſupply it) is a wicked preſumption, with which Satan hath filled their hearts, to lie of *the Holy Ghoſt.*

High ſounding words! But, bleſſed be God, they are only *brutum fulmen*; they make much noiſe, but do not wound. *To what purpoſe could any further inſpiration ſerve?* Anſwer yourſelf: *To enlighten the underſtanding, and to rectify the will.* Elſe, be *the ſcriptures* ever ſo *compleat*, they will not *ſave your* ſoul. How then can you imagine it *is unneceſſary?* And that *the ſuppoſed need of it is injurious to the written word?* And when you ſay yourſelf, *the Spirit is to teach us all things, and to guide us into all truth*; judge *you*, whether this is to *explain*, or to *ſupply the written word.* "O he does this by the *written word.*" True; but alſo *by his holy inſpiration.* So the complers of our liturgy ſpeak: who therefore, according to you, are guilty of *wicked preſumption, with which Satan filled their hearts, to lie of the Holy Ghoſt.*

18. Theſe alſo are the men upon whom you fall in the following warm words. *The power of enthuſiaſm over an heated imagination, may be very great. But it muſt be under the ferment of that old, ſour, leaven, hypocriſy, to riſe to that daring height.* I think not: I think they were neither hypocrites nor enthuſiaſts, though they teach me to pray for, conſequently to expect (unleſs I am an hypocrite indeed) "God's holy inſpiration," both in order to "think the things that be good,"

and

and alſo, " perfectly to love him, and worthily to magnify his holy name."

19. You go on. *They boaſt that their heart is clean, and their ſpirit right within them.* Sir, did you ever read morning prayer on the tenth day of the month? You then ſaid, *Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right ſpirit within me.* Did you *mean* what you ſaid? If you did not, you was guilty of the groſſeſt hypocriſy. If you did; *When did* you expect God would anſwer that prayer? When your body was in the grave? Too late! Unleſs we have clean hearts before we die, it had been good we had never been born!

20. *But they boaſt they are pure from ſin, harmleſs and undefiled.* So, in a ſound ſenſe, is every true believer. *Nay, they boaſt, that their bodies are a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable to God.* Sir, Is not yours? Are not your ſoul and body ſuch a ſacrifice, holy, acceptable to God? As the Lord God liveth, before whom we ſtand, if they are not, you are not a Chriſtian. If you are not an holy, living ſacrifice you are ſtill *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins.* You are an *alien from the commonwealth of Iſreal, without* Chriſtian *hope, without God in the world!*

21. You add, Thus *have I expoſed their boaſted claim to a particular and immediate inſpiration.* Page 30. No, Sir, you have only expoſed yourſelf. For all that we claim, *you* allow. *I have ſhewn what a miſerable farce is carrying on, beneath*

neath the mark of a more refined holineſs. No tittle of this have you ſhewn yet. And before you attempt again to ſhew any thing concerning us, let me intreat you, Sir, to acquaint yourſelf better with our real ſentiments. Perhaps you may then find, that there is not ſo wide a difference as you imagined, between you, and,

Rev. Sir,

Your ſervant, for Chriſt's ſake,

Laken-heath,
Nov. 7, 1758.

JOHN WESLEY.

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO THE

Reverend Dr. FREE.

TULLAMORE, *May* 2, 1758.

Rev. Sir,

1. A LITTLE tract appearing under your name was yesterday put into my hands. You therein call upon me, to speak, "if I have "any exceptions to make to what is advanced," and promise to "reply as fairly and candidly as I "can expect, provided those exceptions be drawn "up, *as you have set the example*, in a short com- "pass, and in the manner wherein all *wise* and "*good*

good people would chuſe to manage a *religious* diſpute."†

2. "In a ſhort compaſs," Sir, they will certainly be drawn up, for my own ſake, as well as yours. For I know the value of time, and would gladly employ it all in what more immediately relates to eternity. But I do not promiſe to draw them up in that manner, whereof *you have ſet the example*. I cannot; I dare not: for I fear God, and do really believe there is a judgment to come. Therefore I dare not *return evil for evil*; neither *railing for railing*. Nor can I allow, that your manner of treating this ſubject, is that "wherein all *wiſe* and *good* people would "chuſe to manage a religious diſpute." Far, very far from it. I ſhall rejoice, if a little more fairneſs and candor ſhould appear in your future writings. But I cannot expect it; for the *nigræ ſuccus loliginis*, wormwood and gall ſeem to have infected your very vitals.

3. The quotation from biſhop *Gibſon*, which takes up five out of nineteen pages, I have particularly anſwered already ‡: and in a manner wherewith I have good reaſon to believe his lordſhip was entirely ſatisfied. With his lordſhip therefore I have no preſent concern: my buſineſs now is with you only. And ſeeing you are "now ready (as you expreſs it) to *run a tilt*," I muſt make what defence I can. Only you muſt excuſe

† Page 22. ‡ In "a letter to the Right Rev. the Lord Biſhop of London."

excuſe me from meeting you on the ſame ground, or fighting you with the ſame weapons. My weapons are only truth and love. May the God of truth and love ſtrengthen my weakneſs!

4. I wave what relates to Mr. *V*——'s perſonal character, which is too well known to need my defence of it: as likewiſe the concurrence (real or imaginary I cannot tell) which gave birth to your performance. All that I concern myſelf with is your five vehement aſſertions, with regard to the people called *Methodiſts*. Theſe I ſhall conſider in their order, and prove to be totally falſe and groundleſs.

5. The firſt is this, † "Their whole miniſtry "is an open and avowed oppoſition to one of the "fundamental articles of our religion." How ſo? Why "the 20th article declares, We may "not ſo expound one ſcripture, that it be repug-"nant to another. ‡ And yet it is notorious, that "the *Methodiſts* do ever explain the word *faith* "as it ſtands in ſome of St. *Paul*'s writings, ſo as "to make his doctrine a direct and flat contra-"diction to that of St. *James*."

This ſtale objection has been anſwered an hundred times, ſo that I really thought we ſhould have heard no more of it. But ſince it is required, I repeat the anſwer once more. By faith we mean, *the evidence of things not ſeen:* by juſtifying faith, a divine evidence or conviction, that Chriſt *loved* me *and gave himſelf for* me. St. *Paul*

 affirms,

† Page 4. ‡ Page 5.

affirms, that a man is juſtified by *this faith*; which *James* never denies; but only aſſerts, that a man cannot be juſtified by a *dead faith*. And this St. *Paul* never affirms.

" But St. *James* declares, *faith without works* " *is dead*. Therefore it is clearly St. *James*'s " meaning, that a faith which is without *virtue* " and *morality*, cannot produce ſalvation. Yet " the *Methodiſts* ſo explain St. *Paul*, as to affirm " that faith without virtue or morality will pro- " duce ſalvation." Where? In which of their writings? This needs ſome proof: I abſolutely deny the fact. So that all which follows is mere flouriſh, and falls to the ground at once: and all that you aver of their † " open and ſcandalous " oppoſition to the 20th article," is no better than open and ſcandalous ſlander.

6. Your ſecond aſſertion is this, " The ‡ *Me-* " *thodiſt*, for the perdition of the ſouls of his fol- " lowers, openly gives our Saviour the lie, loads " the ſcripture with falſhood and contradiction: " (and pray what could a *Mahometan*, or *infidel*, " or the *devil* himſelf do more) yea, openly blaſ- " pheme the name of *Chriſt*, by ſaying, that the " works of men are of no *conſideration* at all; " that God makes no diſtinction between virtue " and vice, that he does not hate vice or love " virtue. What *blaſphemy* then and *impiety* are " thoſe wretches guilty of, who in their diaboli- " cal phrenzy, dare to contradict our Saviour's authority,

† Page 6. ‡ Page 7, 8, 9.

" authority, and that in fuch an eſſential article " of religion?" Here alſo the Methodiſts plead not guilty, and require you to produce your evidence: to ſhew in which of their writings they affirm, that God " will not reward every man " according to his works; that he makes no diſ- " tinction between virtue and vice; that he does " not hate vice or love virtue." Theſe are poſitions which they never remember to have advanced. If you can, refreſh their memory.

7. You aſſert, thirdly, The *Methodiſts*, by theſe poſitions, " deſtroy the eſſential attributes of " God, and ruin his character as *Judge* of the " world." Very true—if they held theſe poſi- tions. But here lies the miſtake. They hold no ſuch poſitions. They never did. They deteſt and abhor them. In arguing therefore on this ſuppoſition, you are again *beating the air*.

8. You aſſert, fourthly, The *Methodiſts* " teach " and propagate † downright atheiſm (a *capital* " crime; and atheiſts in ſome countries have " been put to death) hereby they make room for " all manner of vice and villainy, by which means " the bands of ſociety are diſſolved. And there- " fore this attempt muſt be conſidered as a ſort of " *treaſon* by *magiſtrates*."

Again we deny the whole charge, and call for proof: and, bleſſed be God, ſo do the *magiſtrates* in *Great Britain*. Behold, vehement aſſeverations will not paſs upon them for legal evidence. Nor indeed on any reaſonable men.

 They

† Page 10, 11.

They can diſtinguiſh between *arguing* and *calling names*. The former becomes a gentleman and a Chriſtian: but what is he, who can be guilty of the latter?

9. You aſſert, laſtly, That any who chuſe a *Methodiſt* clergyman for their lecturer, † "put "into that office, which ſhould be held by a "miniſter of the church of *England*, an enemy, "who undermines not only the *legal* eſtabliſh-"ment of that church, but alſo the foundation of "all religion."

Once more we muſt call upon you for the proof: the proof of theſe two particulars, firſt, That I, *John Weſley*, am "an enemy to the "church, and that I undermine not only the legal "eſtabliſhment of the church of *England*, but alſo "the very foundation of all religion." Secondly, That "Mr. *W*—— is an enemy to the church, and "is undermining all religion, as well as the eſta-"bliſhment."

10. Another word and I have done. Are there ‡ "certain *qualifications* required of all "*lecturers*, before they are by law permitted "to ſpeak to the people?" And is a *ſubſcription* to the thirty-nine articles of religion, one of theſe qualifications? And is a perſon who does not "conform to ſuch ſubſcription" diſqualified to be a *lecturer*? Or, who "has ever *held* "or *publiſhed* any thing contrary to what the "church of *England* maintains?" Then certainly

† Page 13. ‡ Page 14.

tainly you, Dr. *John Free*, are not "permitted "by law to ſpeak to the people:" neither are you "qualified to be a *lecturer*" in any church in *London* or *England*, as by law *eſtabliſhed*. For you flatly deny and openly oppoſe more than one or two of thoſe articles. You do not in any wiſe conform to the ſubſcription you made, before you was ordained either prieſt or deacon. You both *hold* and *publiſh* (if you are the author and publiſher of the tract before me) what is groſly, palpably "contrary to what the "church of *England* maintains," in her homilies as well as articles: thoſe homilies to which you have alſo ſubſcribed, in ſubſcribing the 36th article. You have ſubſcribed them, Sir: but did you ever read them? Did you ever read ſo much as the three firſt homilies? I beg of you, Sir, to read theſe at leaſt, before you write again about the doctrine of the church of *England*. And would it not be prudent to read a few of the writings of the *Methodiſts*, before you undertake a farther confutation of them? At preſent you know not the men or their communication. You are as wholly unacquainted both with them and their doctrines, as if you had lived all your days in the iſlands of *Japan*, or the deſarts of *Arabia*. You have given a furious aſſault to you know not whom: and you have done it, you know not why. You have not hurt *me* thereby; but you have hurt yourſelf: perhaps in your character; certainly in your conſcience. For

this is not doing to others as you would they ſhould do unto you. When you grow cool, I truſt you will ſee this clearly: and will no more accuſe, in a manner ſo remote from fairneſs and candor,

Rev. Sir,

Your ſervant for Chriſt's ſake,

JOHN WESLEY.

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO THE

Rev. Mr. DOWNES,

Rector of St. MICHAEL, WOOD-STREET:

Occasioned by his

LATE TRACT,

INTITLED,

Methodism examined and exposed.

Rev. SIR,

1. IN the tract which you have just published concerning the people called *Methodists*, you very properly say, "Our first care should be, candidly and fairly to examine

their doctrines. For, as to cenſure them *unexamined* would be unjuſt, ſo to do the ſame without a *fair and impartial examination* would be ungenerous." And again, "We ſhould, in the firſt place, carefully and candidly examine their doctrines."† This is undoubtedly true. But have you done it? Have you ever examined their doctrines yet? Have you examined them *fairly?* Fairly and *candidly?* Candidly and *carefully?* Have you read over ſo much as the *ſermons* they have publiſhed? Or the *Appeal to Men of Reaſon and Religion?* I hope you have not: for I would fain make ſome little excuſe for your uttering ſo many ſenſeleſs, ſhameleſs falſhoods. I hope you know nothing about the *Methodiſts*, no more than I do about the *Cham* of *Tartary:* that you are ignorant of the whole affair, and are ſo *bold*, only becauſe you are *blind.* Bold enough! Throughout your whole tract, you ſpeak *ſatis pro imperio:* as authoritatively as if you was not an arch-biſhop only, but apoſtolic vicar alſo: as if you had the full *papal power* in your hands, and *fire and faggot* at your beck! And blind enough: ſo that you blunder on, through thick and thin, beſpattering all that come in your way: according to the old, laudable maxim, "Throw dirt enough, and ſome will ſtick."

2. I hope, I ſay, that this is the caſe, and that you do not knowingly aſſert ſo many palpable falſhoods.

† Page 68.

falſhoods. You ſay, "If I am miſtaken, I ſhall always be ready and deſirous to retract my error."‖ A little candour and care might have prevented thoſe miſtakes: this is the firſt thing one would have deſired. The next is, that they may be removed; that you may ſee wherein you have been miſtaken, and be more wary for the time to come.

3. You undertake to give an account, firſt, Of the riſe and principles, then of the practices of the *Methodiſts*.

On the former head you ſay, "Our church has long been infeſted with theſe *grievous wolves*, who though no more than two when they entered in, and they ſo young, they might rather be called *wolflings*," (that is lively and pretty!) "have yet ſpread their ravenous kind through every part of this kingdom. Where what havock they have made, how many of the ſheep they have torn—I need not ſay. § About twenty-five years ago, theſe two bold, though beardleſs divines," (pity, Sir, that you had not taught me twenty-five years ago *ſapientem paſcere barbam*, and thereby to avoid ſome part of your diſpleaſure) "being lifted with ſpiritual pride, were preſumptuous enough to become founders of the ſect called *Methodiſts*." † "A couple ‡ of young, raw, aſpiring twigs of the miniſtry, dreamed of a ſpecial and ſupernatural call to this." No, Sir,

‖ Page 56. § Page 4, 5. † Page 6. ‡ Page 25.

it was *you* dreamed of this, not *we*. We dreamed of nothing twenty-five years ago, but inſtructing our pupils in religion and learning, and a few priſoners, in the common principles of Chriſtianity. You go on. "They were ambitious of being accounted miſſionaries, immediately delegated by heaven to correct the errors of biſhops and archbiſhops, and reform their abuſes, to inſtruct the clergy in the true nature of Chriſtianity, and to caution the laity, not to venture their ſouls in any ſuch unhallowed hands, as refuſed to be initiated in all the myſteries of † *Methodiſm*." Well *aſſerted* indeed! But where is the *proof* of any one of theſe propoſitions? I muſt inſiſt upon this; clear, cogent, proof. Elſe they muſt be ſet down for ſo many glaring falſhoods.

4. "The church of *Rome* (to which on ſo many accounts they were much obliged, and as gratefully returned the obligation) taught them to ſet up for *infallible* interpreters ‡ of ſcripture." Pray on what accounts are we "obliged to the church of *Rome?*" And how have we "returned the obligation?" I beg you would pleaſe, 1. To explain this: and 2. To prove, that we ever yet (whoever taught us) "ſet up for *infallible* interpreters of ſcripture." So far from it, that we have over and over declared, in print as well as in public preaching, "We are no more to expect *any living man* to be *infallible* than to be omniſcient."‖

5. "As

† Page 20, 21. ‡ Page 54. ‖ Sermons, Vol. III. p. 207.

5. " As to other *extraordinary gifts, influences* and *operations* of the Holy Ghoſt, no man who has but once dipped into their journals and other *oſtentatious traſh* of the ſame kind, can doubt their looking upon themſelves, as not coming one whit behind he greateſt of the apoſtles."†

I acquit you, Sir, of ever having " once dipped into that oſtentatious traſh." I do not accuſe you of having read ſo much as the titles of my journals. I ſay, *my* journals; for (as little as you ſeem to know it) my brother has publiſhed none. I therefore look upon this as ſimple ignorance. You talk thus, becauſe you know no better. You do not know, that in theſe very journals I utterly diſclaim the " *extraordinary gifts* of the Spirit," and all other " influences and operations of the Holy Ghoſt," than thoſe that are common to all real Chriſtians.

And yet I will not ſay, this ignorance is blameleſs. For ought you not to have known better? Ought you not to have taken the pains of procuring better information, when it might ſo eaſily have been had? Ought you to have publicly advanced ſo heavy charges as theſe, without knowing whether they were true or no?

6. You proceed to give as punctual an account of us, *tanquam intus & in cute noſſes*. " They outſtript, if poſſible, even *Montanus* for external ſanctity and ſeverity of diſcipline‡. They condemned all regard for temporal concerns.—They

† Page 21. ‡ Page 22.

encouraged their devotees to take no thought for any one thing upon earth: the consequence of which was, a *total neglect* of their affairs, and *impoverishment* of their families." † Blunder all over! We had no room for any discipline, severe or not, five and twenty years ago: unless college discipline, my brother then residing at *Christ-Church*, and I at *Lincoln-College*. And as to our "sanctity" (were it more or less) how do you know it was only *external?* Was you intimately acquainted with us? I do not remember where I had the honour of conversing with you. Or could you (as the legend says of St. *Pachomius*) "smell an heretic ten miles" off? And how came you to dream again, that we "condemned all regard for *temporal* concerns, and encouraged men to take no thought for any one thing upon *earth?*" Vain dream! We on the contrary severely condemn all who neglect their *temporal* concerns, and who do not take care of every thing on earth wherewith God hath intrusted them. The consequence of this is, that the *Methodists*, so called, do not "neglect their affairs and impoverish their families;" but by diligence in business *provide things honest in the sight of all men*. Insomuch that multitudes of them, who in time past, had scarce food to eat, or raiment to put on, have now *all things* needful for *life and godliness*, and that for their families, as well as themselves.

7. Hitherto

† Page 23.

7. Hitherto you have been giving an account of two *wolflings* only: but now they are grown into perfect *wolves*. Let us see what a picture you draw of them in this state, both as to their principles and practice.

You begin with a home stroke, "In the *Montanist* ‡ you may behold the *bold* lineaments and *bloated countenance* of the *Methodist*." I wish you do not squint at the *honest countenance* of Mr. *Venn*, who is indeed as far from fear, as he is from guile. But if it is somewhat *bloated*, that is not his fault: sickness may have the same effect on yours or mine.

But to come closer to the point. "They have § darkened religion with many ridiculous fancies, tending to confound the head, and to corrupt the heart." "A thorough knowledge of them would work in every rightly-disposed mind an aborrence of those doctrines, which directly tend to distract the head, and to debauch the heart, by turning faith into frenzy, and the grace of God into wantonness.†" "These doctrines are unreasonable and ridiculous, clashing with our natural ideas of the divine perfections, with the end of religion, with the honour of God, and man's both present and future happiness. Therefore we pronounce them *filthy dreamers*, turning faith into fancy, the gospel into farce, thus adding blasphemy to enthusiasm."‖

Take

‡ Page 17. § Page 13. † Page 101, 102. ‖ Page 66, 68.

Take breath, Sir, there is a long paragraph behind. " The abetters § of theſe wild and whimſical notions, are 1. Cloſe friends to the *church* of *Rome*, agreeing with her in almoſt every thing, but the doctrine of merit: 2. They are no leſs kind to *infidelity*, by making the Chriſtian religion a mere creature of the imagination: 3. They cut up *Chriſtianity* by the roots, fruſtrating the very end for which Chriſt died, which was that by holineſs we might be *made meet for the inheritance of the ſaints:* 4. They are enemies not only to Chriſtianity, but to *every religion whatſoever*, by labouring to ſubvert or overturn the whole ſyſtem of morality: 5. Conſequently they muſt be *enemies of ſociety*, diſſolving the band by which it is united and knit together." In a word, " All antient hereſies have in a manner *concentered* in the *Methodiſts:* particularly thoſe of the *Simonians*, *Gnoſtics*, *Antinomians*, (as widely diſtant from each other, as *Predeſtinarians* from *Calviniſts!*) *Valentinians*, *Donatiſts* and *Montaniſts*." While your hand was in, you might as will have added, *Carpocrations*, *Eutychians*, *Neſtoriens*, *Sabellians*. If you ſay, " I never heard of them:" no matter for that: you may find them as well as the reſt in Bp. *Pearſon's index*.

Well, all this is mere flouriſh; raiſing a duſt, to blind the eyes of the ſpectators. Generals, you

§ Page 101, 102.

you know, prove nothing. So leaving this as it is, let us come to particulars.

But, firſt, give me leave to tranſcribe a few words from a tract publiſhed ſome years ago. "Your † lordſhip premiſes. *It is not at all needful to charge the particular tenets upon the particular perſons among them.*" Indeed it is needful in the higheſt degree. Juſt as needful as it is, not to put a ſtumbling-block in the way of our brethren: not to lay them under an almoſt inſuperable temptation of condemning the innocent with the guilty.

And it is now far more needful than it was then; as that title of reproach, *Methodiſt*, is now affixt to many people who are not under my care, nor ever had any connexion with me. And what have I to do with theſe? If you give me a nick-name, and then give it to others whom I know not, does this make *me* accountable for *them?* Either for their principles or practice? In no wiſe. I am to anſwer for myſelf, and for thoſe that are in connexion with me. This is all that a man of common ſenſe can undertake, or a man of common humanity require.

Let us begin then upon even ground: and if you can prove upon *me*, *John Weſley*, any one of the charges which you have advanced, call me not only a *wolf* but an *otter*, if you pleaſe.

8. Your firſt particular charge (which indeed runs through your book, and is repeated in twenty different places) is, that we make the way

† Letter to the Bp. of London, p. 4, 5.

way to heaven *too broad*, teaching, men may be ſaved by faith, without works. Some of your words are, " They † *ſet out* with forming a *fair and tempting* model of religion, ſo *flattering* the follies of degenerate man, that it could not fail to gain the hearts of multitudes, eſpecially of the looſe and vicious, the lazy and indolent." " They want to get to heaven the *ſhorteſt way*, and with the *leaſt trouble* : now a reliance on Chriſt and a diſclaiming of good works, are *terms as eaſy* as the meereſt libertine can aſk. They perſuade their people that they may be ſaved by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, without any holineſs of their own : nay, that ‡ good work are not only unneceſſary, but alſo dangerous : that we ‖ may be ſaved by faith, without any other requiſite," ſuch as " goſpel-obedience, and holy life." Laſtly, " The § *Valentinians* pretended, that if good works were neceſſary to ſalvation, it was only to *animal* men, that is, to all who were not of their clan ; and that although ſin might damn *others*, it could not hurt *them*. In conſequence of which they lived in all luſt and impurity, and wallowed in the moſt unheard-of beſtialities. The *Methodiſts* diſtinguiſh much after the ſame manner."

Sir, you are not awake yet. You are dreaming ſtill, and fighting with ſhadows of your own raiſing. The " model of religion with which the

† Page 52. ‡ p. 31. ‖ p. 38, § p. 14.

the *Methodists set out*," is perfectly well known, if not to you, yet to many thousands in *England* who are no *Methodists*. I laid it before the university of *Oxford*, at St. *Mary*'s, on *January* 1, 1733. You may read it when you are at leisure, for it is in print, intitled, " The circumcision of the heart." And whoever reads only that one discourse, with any tolerable share of attention, will easily judge, whether *that model of religion* " flatters the follies of degenerate man," or is likely to " gain the hearts of multitudes, especially of the loose and vicious, the lazy and indolent!" Will a man choose this, as " the *shortest way* to heaven, and with the *least trouble*?" Are these " as *easy terms*, as any libertine or infidel can desire?" The truth is, we have been these thirty years continually reproached for just the contrary to what you dream of: with making the way to heaven *too strait*; with being ourselves *righteous over-much*, and teaching others, they could not be saved without *so many works* as it was impossible for them to perform. And to this day, instead of teaching men, that they may be saved by a faith which is without good works, without " gospel-obedience and holiness of life," we teach exactly the reverse, continually insisting on all *outward* as well as all *inward holiness*. For the notorious truth of this we appeal to the whole tenor of our sermons, printed and unprinted: in particular to those upon our Lord's sermon

on

on the mount, wherein every branch of gospel-obedience is both asserted and proved to be indispensably necessary to eternal salvation.

Therefore as to the rest of the "*antinomian trash*" which you have so carefully gathered up, as, ‖ "That the regenerate are as pure as Christ himself; that it would be criminal for them to pray for pardon; that the greatest crimes are no crimes in the saints," &c. &c. I have no concern therewith at all, no more than with any that teach it. Indeed I have confuted it over and over, in tracts published many years ago.

9. A second charge which you advance, is, That "we suppose every man's final doom to depend on God's sovereign will and pleasure:" (I presume you mean, on his absolute, unconditional decree:) that we "consider man as a mere machine:" that we suppose believers "cannot fall from grace."† Nay, I suppose none of these things. Let those who do, answer for themselves. I suppose just the contrary, in "Predestination calmly considered," a tract published ten years ago.

10. A third charge is, "They represent faith as a supernatural principle, altogether precluding the judgment and understanding, and discerned by some internal signs; not as a firm persuasion, founded on the evidence of reason, and discernable only by a conformity of life and manners to such a persuasion."‡

We

‖ Page 17. † Page 31. ‡ Page 11.

We do not repreſent faith " as altogether precluding, or at all precluding the judgment and underſtanding:" rather as enlightening and ſtrengthening the underſtanding, as clearing and improving the judgment. But we do repreſent it as *the gift of God*, yea, and a " ſupernatural gift," yet it does not preclude " the evidence of reaſon;" though neither is this its whole foundation. " A conformity of life and manners" to that perſuaſion, *Chriſt loved* me, *and gave himſelf for* me, is doubtleſs *one* mark by which it is diſcerned; but not the *only* one. It is likewiſe diſcerned by *internal ſigns*, both by the witneſs of the Spirit, and the fruit of the Spirit, namely, *love*, *peace*, *joy*, *meekneſs*, *gentleneſs*: by all *the mind which was in Chriſt Jeſus*.

11. You aſſert, fourthly, " They ſpeak of grace, that it is as perceptible to the heart, as ſenſible objects are to the ſenſes: whereas the ſcriptures ſpeak of grace, that it is conveyed imperceptibly; and that the only way to be ſatisfied whether we have it or no, is to appeal, not to our inward feelings, but our outward actions."§

* We do ſpeak of grace, (meaning thereby, that power of God which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure) that it is " as perceptible to the heart" (while it comforts, refreſhes, purifies, and ſheds the love of God abroad therein) " as ſenſible objects are to the ſenſes." And yet we do not doubt, but it may frequently

§ Page 32.

frequently be "conveyed to us imperceptibly." But we know no ſcripture which ſpeaks of it as *always* conveyed, and *always working* in an imperceptible manner. We likewiſe allow, that outward actions are *one way* of ſatisfying us, that we have grace in our hearts. But we cannot poſſibly allow, that "the only way to be ſatisfied of this, is to appeal to our *outward actions* and not our *inward feelings*." On the contrary, we believe that love, joy, peace, are *inwardly felt*, or they have no being: and that men are ſatisfied they have grace, firſt by feeling theſe, and afterward by their outward actions.

22. You aſſert, fifthly, "They talk of regeneration in every Chriſtian, as if it was as ſudden and miraculous a converſion, as that of St. *Paul* and the firſt converts to Chriſtianity, and as if the ſigns of it were frightful tremors of body, and convulſive agonies of mind: not as a work graciouſly begun and gradually carried on by the bleſſed Spirit, in conjunction with our rational powers and faculties; the ſigns of which are, ſincere and univerſal || obedience."

This is part true, part falſe. We do believe regeneration, or in plain *Engliſh*, the new birth, to be as miraculous or ſupernatural a work now as it was ſeventeen hundred years ago. We likewiſe believe, that the ſpiritual life, which commences when we are born again, muſt in the nature of the thing, have a *firſt moment* as well

|| Page 38.

well as the natural. But we say again and again, we are concerned for the *substance* of the work, not the *circumstance*. Let it be wrought at all, and we will not contend, whether it be wrought gradually or instantaneously. "But what are the signs that it is wrought?" We never said or thought, that they were either "frightful tremors of body," or "convulsive agonies of mind:" I presume you mean, agonies of mind attended with bodily convulsions. Although we know many persons who *before* this change was wrought, felt much fear and sorrow of mind: which in some of these had such an effect on the body, as to make all their bones to shake. Neither did we ever deny, that it is a "work graciously begun by the holy Spirit, enlightening our understanding" (which I suppose you call "our rational powers and faculties,) as well as influencing our affections." And it is certain, he "gradually carries on this work," by continuing to influence all the powers of the soul: and that the *outward sign* of this inward work, is "sincere and universal obedience."

13. A sixth charge is "They treat Christianity as a wild, enthusiastic scheme," which will bear no *examination*."† Where or when? In what sermon? In what tract, practical or polemical? I wholly deny the charge. I have myself closely and carefully *examined* every part of it, every verse

† Page 30.

verſe of the New Teſtament, in the original, as well as in our own and other tranſlations.

14. Nearly allied to this is the threadbare charge of *enthuſiaſm*, with which you frequently and largely compliment us. But as this alſo is *aſſerted* only, and not *proved*, it falls to the ground of itſelf. Mean time your aſſerting it, is a plain proof, that you know nothing of the men you talk of. Becauſe you know them not, you ſo boldly ſay, "One advantage we have over them, and that is *reaſon*." Nay, that is the very queſtion. I appeal to all mankind, whether you have it, or no? However, you are ſure, we have it not, and are never likely to have. For "reaſon, you ſay, cannot do much with an enthuſiaſt, whoſe firſt principle is, to have nothing to do with reaſon, but reſolve all his religious opinions and notions into immediate inſpiration." Then, by your own account I am no enthuſiaſt; for I reſolve none of my notions into immediate inſpiration. I have ſomething to do with reaſon; perhaps as much as many of thoſe who *make no account of my labours*. And I am ready to give up every opinion, which I cannot by calm, clear reaſon defend. Whenever therefore you "will try what you can do by *argument*," which you have not done yet, I wait your leiſure, and will follow you ſtep by ſtep, which way ſoever you lead.

* 15. "But is not this plain proof of the enthuſiaſm of the *Methodiſts*, that they deſpiſe human

man learning, and make a loud and terrible outcry againſt it?" Pray, Sir, when and where was this done? Be ſo good as to point out the time and place; for I am quite a ſtranger to it. I believe indeed, and ſo do you, that many men make an ill uſe of their learning. But ſo they do of their bibles: therefore this is no reaſon for deſpiſing or crying out againſt it. I would uſe it juſt as far as it will go; how far I apprehend it may be of uſe, how far I judge it to be expedient at leaſt, if not neceſſary for a clergyman, you might have ſeen, in the *Earneſt Addreſs to the clergy*. But in mean time I bleſs God, that there is a more excellent gift, than either the knowledge of languages or philoſophy. For tongues and knowledge and learning will *vaniſh away*; but *love never faileth*.

16. I think this is all you have ſaidwhich is any way material concerning the *doctrines* of the *Methodiſts*. The charges you bring concerning their *ſpirit* or *practice*, may be diſpatched in fewer words.

And, firſt, you charge them with *pride* and *uncharitableneſs*. "They † talk as proudly as the *Dotaniſts*, of their being the only true preachers of the goſpel, and eſteem themſelves, in contra-diſtinction to others, as the regenerate, the children of God, and as having arrived at ſinleſs perfection."

All

† Page 15.

All of a piece. We neither talk nor think ſo. We doubt not but there are many true preachers of the goſpel, both in *England* and elſewhere, who have no connexion with, no knowledge of us. Neither can we doubt, but that there are many thouſand children of God, who never heard our voice, or ſaw our face. And this may ſuffice for an anſwer to all the aſſertions of the ſame kind, which are ſcattered up and down your work. Of ſinleſs perfection, here brought in by head and ſhoulders, I have nothing to ſay at preſent.

17. You charge them, ſecondly, "with boldneſs and blaſphemy, who triumphing in their train of credulous and crazy followers, the *ſpurious* (ſhould it not be rather the *genuine*) offſpring of their *inſidious craft*, aſcribe the glorious event to divine grace, and in almoſt every page of their *paltry harangues*, invoke the bleſſed Spirit to go along with them, in their ſoul-awakening work, that is, to continue to aſſiſt them in ſeducing the ſimple and unwary."‖

What we aſcribe to divine grace is this, the convincing ſinners of the errors of their ways, and the *turning them from darkneſs to light, from the power of Satan to God*. Do not you yourſelf "aſcribe this to grace?" And do not *you* too "invoke the bleſſed Spirit, to go along with you "in every part of your work?" If you do not, you loſe all your labour.—Whether we "ſeduce men into

‖ Page 41.

into ſin," or by his grace ſave them from it another queſtion.

18. You charge us, thirdly, with "requiring † a blind and implicit truſt from our diſciples," who accordingly "truſt as implicitly ‡ in their preachers, as the papiſts in their Pope, councils, or church." Far from it: neither do we require it; nor do they that hear us place any ſuch truſt in any creature. They *ſearch the ſcriptures*, and hereby try every doctrine whether it be of God. And what is agreeable to ſcripture they embrace; what is contrary to it they reject.

19 You charge us, fourthly, with injuring the clergy in various ways. 1ſt. "They are very induſtrious to diſſolve or break off that ſpiritual intercourſe, which the relation wherein we ſtand, requires ſhould be preſerved betwixt us and our people." But can that ſpiritual intercourſe be either preſerved or broke off, which never exiſted? What ſpiritual intercourſe exiſts between *you*, the *rector* of St. *Michael*, and the people of your pariſh? I ſuppoſe you preach to them once a week, and now and then read prayers. Perhaps you viſit one in ten of the ſick. And is this all the *ſpiritual intercourſe*, which you have with thoſe, *over whom the Holy Ghoſt hath made you an overſeer?* In how poor a ſenſe then do you *watch over* the *ſouls*, for whom you are to *give an account* to God! Sir, I wiſh to God, there were a truly ſpiritual intercourſe between

† Page 10. ‡ p. 51.

you and all your people! I wish you "knew all your flock by name, not excepting the men-servants and women-servants!" Then you might *cherish* each, *as a nurse her own children*, and *train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*. Then might you *warn every one and exhort every one*, till you should *present every one perfect in Christ Jesus*.

"But they say, our sermons contradict the articles, homilies and liturgy of our own church; yea, that we contradict ourselves, saying one thing in the desk and another in the pulpit." And is there not cause to say so? I myself have heard several sermons preached in churches, which flatly contradicted both the articles, homilies and liturgy, particularly on the head of justification. I have likewise heard more than one or two persons, who "said one thing in the desk, and another in the pulpit." In the desk they prayed God to *cleanse the thoughts of their hearts by the inspiration of his Holy Spirit*. In the pulpit they said "There was no such thing as *inspiration*, since the time of the apostles."

"But this is not all. You poison the people by the most peevish and spiteful invectives against the clergy, the most rude and rancorous revilings, and the most invidious † calumnies." No more than I poison them with *arsenic*. I make no peevish or spiteful invectives against any man. Rude and rancorous revilings (such as

your

† Page 51.

your preſent tract abounds with) are alſo far from me. I dare not *return railing for railing*, becauſe (whether you know it, or no) I fear God. Invidious calumnies likewiſe I never dealt in: all ſuch weapons I leave to *you*.

20. One charge remains, which you repeat over and over, and lay a peculiar ſtreſs upon: (as to what you talk about *perverting ſcripture*, I paſs it by, as mere, unmeaning, common-place declamation.) It is the poor old, worn-out tale of "Getting money by preaching." This you only intimate at firſt. "Some of their followers had an *inward call*, to ſell all that they had, and lay it † *at their feet*." Pray, Sir, favour us with the name of one, and we will excuſe you as to all the reſt. In the next page you grow bolder, and roundly affirm "With all their heavenly-mindedneſs, they could not help caſting a ſheep's-eye at the unrighteous mammon. Nor did they pay their court to it with leſs cunning and ſucceſs than *Montanus*. Under the ſpecious appearance of gifts and offerings, they raiſed contributions from every quarter. Beſides the weekly penſions ſqueezed out of the poorer and lower part of their community, they were favoured with very large oblations from perſons of better figure and fortune: and eſpecially from many *believing* wives, who had learned to practiſe pious frauds on their *unbelieving* huſbands."

I am almoſt aſhamed (having done it twenty

† Page 22.

times before) to anſwer this ſtale calumny again. But the bold, frontleſs manner wherein you advance it, obliges me ſo to do. Know then, Sir, that you have no authority either from ſcripture or reaſon, to judge of other men by *yourſelf*. If *your own* conſcience convicts you of loving money, of "caſting a ſheep's-eye at the unrighteous mammon," humble yourſelf before God, if haply the thoughts and deſires of your heart may be forgiven you. But, bleſſed be God, my conſcience is clear. My heart does not condemn me in this matter. I know, and God knoweth, that I have no deſire to *load* myſelf *with thick clay:* that I love money no more than I love the mire in the ſtreets: that I ſeek it not. And I have it not: any more than ſuffices for food and raiment, for the plain conveniencies of life. I pay no court to it at all, or to thoſe that have it, either with cunning or without. For myſelf, for my own uſe, I raiſe no contributions either great or ſmall. The weekly contributions of our community (which are freely given, not *ſqueezed* out of any) as well as the gifts and offerings at the Lord's table never come into my hands. I have no concern with them, not ſo much as *the beholding them with my eyes*. They are received every week by the ſtewards of the ſociety, men of well known character in the world, and by them conſtantly diſtributed within the week, to thoſe whom they know to be

be in real neceſſity. As to the " very large oblations wherewith I am favoured by perſons of better figure and fortune," I know nothing of them: be ſo kind as to refreſh my memory by mentioning a few of their names. I have the happineſs of knowing ſome of great figure and fortune: ſome right honourable perſons. But if I were to ſay, that all of them together had given me ſeven pounds in ſeven years, I ſhould ſay more than I could make good. And yet I doubt not, but they would freely give me any thing I wanted: but by the bleſſing of God, I want nothing that they can give. I want only more of the Spirit of love and power, and of an healthful mind.—As to thoſe " many *believing* wives who practiſe pious frauds on their *unbelieving* huſbands," I know them not, no, not one of that kind: therefore I doubt the fact. If you know any ſuch, be pleaſed to give us their names and places of abode. Otherwiſe you muſt bear the blame of being the *lover*, if not *the maker of a lie*.

Perhaps you will ſay, " Why, a great man ſaid the ſame thing but a few years ago." What if he did? Let the frog ſwell as long as he can, he will not equal the ox. *He* might ſay many things, all circumſtances conſidered, which will not come well from *you*; as *you* have neither his wit, nor ſenſe, nor learning, nor age, nor dignity.

Tibi parvula res eſt:
Metiri ſe quemq; ſuo modulo ac pede verum eſt.

If *you* fall upon people that meddle not with you, without either fear or wit, you may poſſibly find they have a little more to ſay for themſelves than you was aware of.———I *follow peace with all men:* but if a man ſet upon me, without either rhyme or reaſon, I think it my duty to defend myſelf, ſo far as truth and juſtice permit. Yet ſtill I am (if a poor enthuſiaſt may not be ſo bold as to ſtile himſelf your brother,)

Reverend Sir,

LONDON, *Your ſervant for Chriſt's ſake,*
Nov. 17, 1759. JOHN WESLEY.

A LETTER

A

LETTER

TO THE

Reverend Dr. HORNE:

Occaſioned by his late SERMON preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*, about 1762.

Rev. Sir,

WHEN you ſpoke of "*hereſies* making their "periodical revolutions," of "*Antino-*"*mianiſm* rampant among us," and immediately after, of "the *new lights* at the *Tabernacle* and "*Foundery*:" muſt not your hearers naturally think, that Mr. *Whitefield* and I were reviving thoſe hereſies? But do you know the perſons of whom you ſpeak? Have you ever converſed with

them? Have you read their writings? If not, is it kind, is it juſt, to paſs ſo ſevere a cenſure upon them? Had you only taken the trouble of reading one tract, the "Appeal to Men of Reaſon and Religion," you would have ſeen, that a great part of what you affirm, is what I never denied. To put this beyond diſpute, I beg leave to tranſcribe ſome paſſages from that treatiſe; which will ſhew not only what I teach now, but what I have taught for many years. I will afterward ſimply and plainly declare, wherein I as yet differ from you. And the rather, that if I err therein, you may, by God's aſſiſtance, convince me of it.

I. 1. "*Juſtification* ſometimes means, our acquittal at the laſt day.†

2. That faith alone is the proximate condition of juſtification."

II. 1. "I have here ſhewn at large, what is the doctrine I teach with regard to juſtification, and have taught, ever ſince I was convinced of it myſelf, by carefully reading the New Teſtament and the Homilies. In many points, I apprehend, it agrees with yours; in ſome, it does not: theſe I come now to conſider. May God enable me to do it, in love and meekneſs of wiſdom!"

You ſay, p. 7. "Happy times, when *faith* and

† Farther Appeal, Part I. p. 1, 2.

and *a good life* were ſynonymous terms." I conceive, they never were. Is not faith the root, a good life the tree ſpringing therefrom?

P. 9. " That good works are a neceſſary condition of our juſtification, may be proved, 1. From expreſs teſtimonies of ſcripture. So *Iſaiah* i. 16. *Ceaſe from evil, learn to do well.* Then *your ſins that were as ſcarlet, ſhall be white as ſnow.* Here *ceaſing from evil*, and learning to do well, are the conditions of pardon." I anſwer, without them there is no pardon; yet the immediate condition of it is faith. He that believeth, and he alone, is juſtified before God. " So *Ezekiel* xxxiii. 14. If the ſinner *turn from his evil ways*, and *walk in the ſtatutes of life*, then *all his ſins ſhall not be once mentioned to him.*" Moſt ſure; that is, if he believe; elſe, whatever his outward walking be, he cannot be juſtified.

The next ſcripture you cite, † *Matt.* xi. 28. proves no more than this, that none find *reſt to their ſouls*, unleſs they firſt *come to* Chriſt (namely by faith) and then obey him.

But " he ſays, *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you.*" He does ſo: but how does it appear, that this relates to juſtification at all?

" St. *Peter* alſo declares, ‡ *In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs is accepted of him.*" He is: but none can either fear God or work righteouſneſs, till he believes ac-

 cording

† Sermon, p. 10. ‡ Acts x. 34.

cording to the diſpenſation he is under. "And St. *John*, *He that doth righteouſneſs is righteous.*" I do not ſee, that this proves any thing. "And again, † *If we walk in the light as God is in the light, then have we communion with him, and the blood of Jeſus Chriſt his Son cleanſeth us from all ſin.*" This would prove ſomething if it could be proved, that *cleanſing us from all ſin*, meant only juſtification.

"The ſcriptures inſiſt upon the neceſſity of repentance in particular for that purpoſe. But repentance comprehends compunction, humiliation, hatred of ſin, confeſſion of it, prayer for mercy, ceaſing from evil, a firm purpoſe to do well, reſtitution of ill-got goods, forgiveneſs of all who have done us wrong, and works of beneficence."‡ I believe it does comprehend all theſe, either as parts or as fruits of it: and it comprehends "the fear," but not "the love of God:" that flows from a higher principle. And he who loves God is not barely in the right way to juſtification: he is actually juſtified. The reſt of the paragraph aſſerts juſt the ſame thing which was aſſerted in thoſe words, 'previous to juſtifying faith muſt be repentance, and, if opportunity permits, *fruits meet for repentance.*' But ſtill I muſt obſerve, that "neither the one nor the other is neceſſary, either in the *ſame ſenſe*, or in the *ſame degree* with faith." No ſcripture teſtimony

† 1 John i. 7. ‡ Page 11, 12.

mony can be produced, which any way contradicts this.

2. "That works are a neceſſary condition of our juſtification, may be proved, ſecondly, from ſcripture examples: particularly thoſe recited in the eleventh chapter of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. Theſe all *through faith wrought righteouſneſs*; without *working righteouſneſs*, they had never *obtained the promiſes*."† I ſay the ſame thing: none are finally ſaved, but thoſe whoſe faith *worketh by love*.

"Even in the thief upon the croſs, faith was attended by repentance, piety and charity." It was; repentance went before his faith: piety and charity accompanied it. "Therefore he was not juſtified by faith alone." Our church, adopting the words of St. *Chryſoſtom*, expreſly affirms, in the paſſage above cited, he was juſtified by faith alone. And her authority ought to weigh more than even that of biſhop *Bull*, or of any ſingle man whatever. Authority, be pleaſed to obſerve, I plead againſt authority; reaſon againſt reaſon.

It is no objection, that the faith whereby he was juſtified, *immediately produced* good works.

3. How we are juſtified by *faith alone*, and yet by ſuch a *faith* as is *not alone*: it may be proper to explain. And this alſo I chuſe to do, not in my own words, but in thoſe of our church.

"Faith

† Page 19.

" Faith does not ſhut out repentance, hope, love, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is juſtified; but it ſhutteth them out from the office of juſtifying. So that although they be all preſent together in him that is juſtified, yet they juſtify not altogether."† Neither doth faith ſhut out good works, neceſſarily to be done *afterwards*, of duty towards God.

" That we are juſtified only by this faith in Chriſt, ſpeak all the antient authors: ſpecially *Origen*, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, *Hilary*, *Baſil*, St. *Ambroſe* and St. *Auguſtine*."

4. You go on. " Thirdly, ‡ if we conſider the nature of faith, it will appear impoſſible that a man ſhould be juſtified by that alone. Faith is either an *aſſent* to the goſpel truths, or a reliance on the goſpel promiſes. I know of no other notion of faith." I do: an ἔλεγχος *of things not ſeen:* which is far more than a bare *aſſent*, and yet *toto genere* different from a *reliance*. Therefore if you prove, that neither an *aſſent* nor a *reliance* juſtifies, nor both of them together, ſtill you do not prove, that we are not juſtified by faith, even by faith alone. But how do you prove, that we cannot be juſtified by faith as a reliance on the promiſes? Thus. " Such a reliance muſt be founded on a conſciouſneſs of having performed the conditions. And a reliance ſo founded is the reſult of works wrought *through faith*."

† Homily on the Salvation of Man. ‡ Page 15.

faith." No: of works wrought *without faith*: else the argument implies a contradiction. For it runs thus, (on the supposition that *faith* and *reliance* were synonymous terms) such a reliance is the result of works wrought through such a reliance.

5. Your fourth argument against justification by faith alone, is drawn from the *nature* of justification. This, you observe, " implies a prisoner at the bar, and a law by which he is to be tried; and this is not the law of *Moses*, but that of Christ, requiring repentance and faith, with their proper fruits,"† which now, through the blood of Christ, are accepted and *counted for righteousness*. St. *Paul* affirms this, concerning faith, in the fourth chapter of his epistle to the *Romans*. But where does he say, that either repentance or its fruits are counted for righteousness? Nevertheless I allow, that the law of Christ requires such repentance and faith before justification, as, if there be opportunity, will bring forth the *fruits of righteousness*. But if there be not, he that repents and believes is justified notwithstanding. Consequently, these alone are necessary, *indispensably necessary* conditions of our justification.

6. Your last argument against justification by faith alone, " is drawn from the method of God's proceeding at the last day. He will then judge every man *according to his works*. If therefore works wrought through faith are the ground of the

† Pag. 16.

the ſentence paſt upon us in that day, then are they a neceſſary condition of our juſtification:" † in other words, "if they are a condition of our *final*, they are a condition of our *preſent* juſtification." I cannot allow the conſequence. All holineſs muſt precede our entering into glory. But no holineſs can exiſt, till *being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

7. You next attempt to reconcile the writings of St. *Paul* with juſtification by works. In order to this you ſay, "in the three firſt chapters of his epiſtle to the *Romans*, he proves that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* muſt have recourſe to the goſpel of Chriſt. To this end he convicts the whole world of ſin. And having *ſtopped every mouth*, he makes his inference, *Therefore by the deeds of the law, there ſhall no fleſh be juſtified. We conclude*, then, ſays he, *a man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* But here ariſe two queſtions, firſt, What are the works excluded from juſtifying? Secondly, What is the faith which juſtifies?"‡

"The works excluded are *Heathen* and *Jewiſh* works, ſet up as meritorious. This is evident from hence, that Heathens and carnal Jews are the perſons againſt whom he is arguing." Not ſo: he is arguing againſt all mankind: he is "convicting *the whole* world of ſin." His concern is, to *ſtop every mouth*, by proving, that *no fleſh*, none

† Page 19. ‡ Page 20, 21, 22.

none born of a woman, no child of man can *be juſtified by his own works.* Conſequently he ſpeaks of *all* the works of *all* mankind, antecedent to juſtification, whether *Jewiſh* or any other, whether ſuppoſed *meritorious* or not, of which the text ſays not one word. Therefore *all works* antecedent to juſtification are excluded, and faith *is ſet in flat oppoſition* to them. *Unto him that worketh not but believeth, his faith is counted to him for righteouſneſs.*

"But what is the faith to which he attributes juſtification? That *which worketh by love:* which is the ſame with the *new creature,* and implies in it the keeping the commandments of God."

It is undoubtedly true, that nothing avails for our final ſalvation without καινὴ κτίσις, *a new creation,* and conſequent thereon, a ſincere, uniform keeping of the commandments of God. This St. *Paul* conſtantly declares. But where does he ſay, this is the condition of our juſtification? In the epiſtles to the *Romans* and *Galatians* particularly, he vehemently aſſerts the contrary; earneſtly maintaining, that nothing is *abſolutely neceſſary* to this, but *believing in him that juſtifieth the ungodly:* not the godly; not him that is already a *new creature,* that previouſly *keeps* all the commandments of God. He does this *afterward:* when he is juſtified by faith, then his faith *worketh by love.*

Therefore there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, juſtified by faith in him, provided

vided they *walk in him whom they have received, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* But should they turn back, and walk again after the flesh, they would again be under condemnation. But this no way proves, that *walking after the Spirit* was the condition of their justification.†

Neither will any thing like this follow, from the apostle's saying to the *Corinthians, Though I had all faith, so as to remove mountains,* and have not charity, I am nothing. This only proves, that *miracle-working* faith may be, where *saving* faith is not.

* 8. To the argument, "St. *Paul* says, *Abraham was justified by faith,*" you answer, "St. *James* says, *Abraham was justified by works.*"‡ True: but he neither speaks of the same *justification,* nor the same faith, nor the same works. Not of the same justification; for St. *Paul* speaks of that justification which was five and twenty years before *Isaac* was born:§ St. *James* of that wherewith he was justified *when he offered up Isaac* on the altar. It is *living* faith, whereby St. *Paul* affirms we are justified: it is *dead* faith, whereby St. *James* affirms we are not justified. St. *Paul* speaks of *works* antecedent to justification: St. *James* of *works* consequent upon it. This is the plain, easy, natural way of reconciling the two apostles.

* The fact was manifestly this: 1. When *Abraham* dwelt in *Haran,* being then seventy five years old,

† Page 23. ‡ Page 24. § Gen.

old, God called him thence: he *believed God, and he counted it to him for righteouſneſs.* That is, he *was juſtified by faith,* as St. *Paul* ſtrenuouſly aſſerts. 2. Many years after *Iſaac* was born (ſome of the antients thought, three and thirty) *Abraham ſhewing his faith by his works,* offered him up upon the altar. 3. Here the *faith* by which, in St. *Paul*'s ſenſe, he was juſtified long before, *wrought together with his works,* and he was juſtified, in St. *James*'s ſenſe, that is, (as the apoſtle explains his own meaning) *by works* his *faith was made perfect.* God confirmed, increaſed and perfected the principle from which thoſe works ſprang.

* 9. Drawing to a concluſion you ſay, "What pity ſo many volumes ſhould have been written upon the queſtion, whether a man be juſtified by *faith* or *works,* ſeeing they are two eſſential parts of the ſame thing?"† If by works you underſtand inward and outward holineſs, both faith and works are eſſential parts of Chriſtianity: and yet they are eſſentially different, and by God himſelf contradiſtinguiſhed from each other. And that in the very queſtion before us, *him that* worketh not, but believeth. Therefore, whether a man be juſtified by *faith* or *works,* is a point of the laſt importance: otherwiſe our reformers could not have anſwered to God, their ſpending ſo much time upon it. Indeed they were both too wiſe and

† Page 25.

and too good men, to have "wrote so many volumes" on a trifling or needless question.

10. If in speaking on this important point, (such at least it appears to *me*) I have said any thing offensive, any that implies the least degree of anger or disrespect, it was entirely foreign to my intention: nor indeed have I any provocation. I have no room to be angry at your maintaining what you believe to be the truth of the gospel: even though I might wish you had omitted a few expressions,

Quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

In the general, from all I have heard concerning you, I cannot but very highly esteem you in love. And that God may give you both "a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort," is the prayer of,

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate brother and servant,

JOHN WESLEY.

SOME

SOME

REMARKS

ON A

Defence of the Preface to the *Edinburgh* edition of *Aſpaſio* vindicated.

Edinburgh, May, 1766.

I Have neither time, nor inclination, to write a formal anſwer to the Reverend Dr. *Erſkine*'s tract. My hope of convincing him is loſt: he has drank in all the ſpirit of the book he has publiſhed. But I owe it to God and his children, to ſay ſomething for myſelf, when I am attacked in ſo violent a manner, if haply ſome may take knowledge, that I alſo endeavour to *live honeſtly, and to ſerve God.*

I. Dr. *Erſkine*

I. Dr. *Erſkine* ſays, "An edition of theſe "letters has been publiſhed in *London*, from the "author's own manuſcripts, which puts the au- "thenticity of them beyond doubt." I anſwer, This is a miſtake: impartial men doubt of their authenticity as much as ever. (I mean, not with regard to the letters in general, but to many particular paſſages.) And that for two reaſons. Firſt, becauſe thoſe paſſages breathe an acrimony and bitterneſs which Mr. *Hervey* in his life-time never ſhewed to any one, and leaſt of all to one he was deeply obliged to. Surely *this* is not what Dr. *E.* terms his "ſcriptural and *ani-* "*mated manner.*" I hope it was not for *this cauſe*, that he pronounces this "equal, if not ſuperior "to any one of his controverſial pieces publiſhed "in his life-time." Indeed, I knew of no controverſial piece at all which he publiſhed in his life-time. His *Dialogues* he no more intended for ſuch, than his *Meditations among the tombs.* A ſecond reaſon for doubting of their authenticity is, that he told his brother, with his dying voice, (I have it under his brother's own hand,) "I deſire my letters may not be publiſhed: "becauſe great part of them is wrote in a ſhort- "hand, which none but myſelf can read."

II. But the preſent queſtion lies, not between me and Mr. *Hervey*, but between Dr. *E.* and me. He vehemently attacks me, for ſaying, "Orthodoxy, or right opinion, is, at beſt, but a "very ſlender part of religion, if any part of it

"at

" at all." He labours to deduce the moſt frightful conſequences from it, and cries, " If once " men believe, that right opinion is a ſlender " part of religion, if any part of religion or no " part at all, there is ſcarce any thing ſo fooliſh, " or ſo wicked, which Satan may not prompt " to," p. 6. And what if, after all, Dr. *E.* himſelf believes the very ſame thing? I am much miſtaken if he does not. Let us now fairly make the trial.

I aſſert, 1. That, in ſome caſes, " *right opi-* " *nion* is no part of religion:" in other words, there may be right opinion, where there is no religion. I inſtance, in the devil. Has he not right opinions? Dr. *E.* muſt, per force, ſay, yes. Has he religion? Dr. *E.* muſt ſay, No. Therefore, here right opinion is *no part* of religion. Thus far then Dr. *E.* himſelf believes as I do.

I aſſert, 2. In other caſes, " it is a ſlender part " of religion." Obſerve, I ſpeak of *right opinion*, as contradiſtinguiſhed both from *right tempers*, and from *right words and actions*. Of this, I ſay, " it is a ſlender part of religion." And can Dr. *E.* ſay otherwiſe? Surely, no: nor any man living, unleſs he be brimful of the ſpirit of contradiction.

" Nay, but I affirm, *right tempers* cannot ſub- " ſiſt without *right opinion*: the love of God, " for inſtance, cannot ſubſiſt without a right " opinion of him." I have never ſaid any thing to the contrary: But this is another queſtion.

Though

Though *right tempers* cannot ſubſiſt without *right opinion*, yet *right opinion* may ſubſiſt without *right tempers*. There may be a right opinion of God, without either love, or one right temper toward him. Satan is a proof of it. All therefore that I aſſert in this matter, Dr. *E.* muſt affirm too.

But does it hence follow, "that ignorance and error are as friendly to virtue as juſt ſentiments?" Or, that any man may "diſbelieve the bible with perfect innocence or ſafety?" Does Dr. *E.* himſelf think I believe this? I take upon me to ſay, he does not think ſo. "But why does he talk as if he did?" Becauſe it is a clear conſequence from your own aſſertion. I anſwer. 1. If it be, that conſequence is as chargeable on Dr. *E.* as on me: ſince he muſt, *nolens volens*, aſſert the ſame thing, unleſs he will diſpute through a ſtone-wall. 2. This is no conſequence at all. For admitting "*right tempers* cannot ſubſiſt without *right opinions*," you cannot infer; therefore *right opinions* cannot ſubſiſt without *right tempers*." Prove this by other mediums, if you can: but it will never be proved by this. However, until this is done, I hope to hear no more of this thread-bare objection.

III. Dr. *E.* attacks me, *ſecondly*, with equal vehemence, on the head of *juſtification*. In various parts of his tract, he flatly charges me with holding *juſtification* by works. In ſupport of this charge,

charge, he cites several sentences out of various treatises, abridgments of which I have occasionally published within these thirty years. As I have not those abridgments by me now, I suppose the citations are fairly made: and that they are exactly made, without any mistake, either designed or undesigned. I will suppose likewise, that some of these expressions, gleaned up from several tracts, are indefensible. And what is it which any unprejudiced person can infer from this? Will any candid man judge of my sentiments, either on this, or any other head, from a few sentences of other men, (though reprinted by me, after premising, that I did not approve of *all their expressions*,) or from my own avowed, explicit declarations, repeated over and over? Yet this is the way by which Dr. *E.* proves, that I hold justification by works! He continually cites the words of those authors as *mine*, telling his reader, "Mr. *Wesley* says thus and thus." I do not say so; and no man can prove it, unless by citing *my own* words. I believe justification by faith alone, as much as I believe there is a God. I declared this in the sermon preached before the university of *Oxford*, eight and twenty years ago. I declared it to all the world eighteen years ago, in a sermon wrote expressly on the subject. I have never varied from it, no, not an hair's breadth, from 1738 to this day. Is it not strange, then, that at this time of day any one should face me down, (yea, and one who has that very volume

in

in his hands, wherein that ſermon on juſtification by faith is contained,) that I hold juſtification by works? And that, truly, becauſe there are ſome expreſſions in ſome tracts wrote by other men, but reprinted by me during a courſe of years, which ſeem (at leaſt) to countenance that doctrine! Let it ſuffice, (and it *will* ſuffice for every impartial man,) that I abſolutely, once for all, renounce every expreſſion which contradicts that fundamental truth, *We are juſtified by faith alone.*

"But you have publiſhed *John Goodwin*'s treatiſe on juſtification." I have ſo: but I have not undertaken to defend every expreſſion which occurs therein. Therefore none has a right to palm them upon the world as *mine.* And yet I deſire no one will condemn that treatiſe before he has read it over; and that ſeriouſly and carefully; for it can hardly be underſtood by a ſlight or curſory reading. And let whoever has carefully read it declare, whether he has not proved every article he aſſerts, not only by plain expreſs ſcripture, but by the authority of the moſt eminent reformers. If Dr. *E.* thinks otherwiſe, let him confute him; but let no man condemn what he cannot anſwer.

IV. Dr. *E.* attacks me, *thirdly*, on the head of *Chriſtian perfection.* It is not my deſign to enter into the merits of the cauſe. I would only juſt obſerve 1. That the great argument which Dr. *E.* brings againſt it is of no force; and 2. That he

miſunderſtands

misunderstands and misrepresents my sentiments on the subject.

First, His great argument against it is of no force. It runs thus. "Paul's contention with "Barnabas, is a strong argument against the at- "tainableness of perfection in this life," p. 41. True, if we judge by the *bare sound* of the *English* version. But Dr. *E.* reads the original: ὥ ἐγένετο παροξυσμός. It does not say, that *sharpness* was on *both sides*. It does not say, that all, or any part of it was on St. Paul's side. Neither does the context prove, that he was in any fault at all. Indeed, *he thought it not good to take him with them*, who had deserted them before. Now certainly there was no blame in this: neither was there any in his subsequent behaviour. For when *Barnabas* also departed from it, he went on still in the work. *He went through Syria and Cilicia*, as he had proposed, *confirming the churches*.

Secondly, He misunderstands and misrepresents my sentiments on the subject. He says, "Mr. *Wesley* seems to maintain, that sinless perfection is actually attained *by every one born of God*," p. 39.

I do not maintain this. I do not believe it. I believe Christian perfection or *perfect love*, (*sinless perfection*, is an expression, which I do not use or contend for) is not attained by any of the children of God, till they are what the apostle *John* terms *fathers*. And this I expressly declare

in that very ſermon which Dr. *E.* ſo largely quotes.

IV. Why Dr. *E.* ſhould quarrel with me concerning *natural free-will*, I cannot conceive, unleſs for quarrelling's ſake. For it is certain, on this head, if no other, we are preciſely of one mind.

I believe that *Adam* before his fall had ſuch *freedom of will*, that he might chuſe either good or evil: but that ſince the fall no child of man has a natural power to chuſe any thing that is truly good. Yet I know, and who does not?) that man has ſtill freedom of will in things of an indifferent nature. Does not Dr. *E.* agree with me in this? O! why ſhould we *ſeek* occaſion of contention?

V. That *Michael Servetus* was "one of the wildeſt antitrinitarians that ever appeared," is by no means clear. I doubt of it, on the authority of *Calvin* himſelf, who certainly was not prejudiced in his favour. For if *Calvin* does not miſquote his words, he was no antitrinitarian at all. *Calvin* himſelf gives a quotation from one of his letters, in which he expreſsly declares, "I do believe the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghoſt is God. But I dare not uſe the word *trinity*, or *perſon*." I dare, and I think them very good words. But I ſhould think it very hard to be

be burnt alive for not using them: especially with a slow fire, made of moist, green wood!

I believe *Calvin* was a great instrument of God; and that he was a wise and a pious man. But I cannot but advise those who love his memory to let *Servetus* alone. Yet if any one resolves to understand the whole affair, he may see a circumstantial account of it, published some years since by Dr. *Chandler*, an eminent Presbyterian divine in *London*.

VI. Of myself I shall speak a little by and by. But I would now speak of the *Methodists*, so called, in general. Concerning these, Dr. *E.* cites the following words, from a little tract, published some years since.†

"We look upon ourselves, not as the authors "or ringleaders of a particular sect or party, but "as messengers of God to those who are Christians in name, but Heathens in heart and life, "to call them back to that from which they are "fallen, to real genuine Christianity."—"We "look upon the *Methodists*, not as any particular party, but as living witnesses, in and to "every party, of that Christianity which we "preach." p. 3.

On this Dr. *E.* remarks. "If the Methodist-teachers confined themselves to preaching, there might be some room for this plea: but hardly, when they form bands and classes:" that is, when they

† Advice to the people called Methodists.

they adviſe thoſe who are " recalled to real Chriſtianity" to watch over each other, leſt they fall again into the nominal religion, or no religion, that ſurrounds them. But how does this alter the caſe? What, if being jealous *leſt any of* their brethren ſhould again *be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin*, they ſhould *exhort one another*, not only weekly, but daily, to cleave to God *with full purpoſe of heart?* Why might we not plead ſtill, that theſe are not to " be looked upon as any particular party, but as living witneſſes, in and to every party, of that Chriſtianity which we preach?"

What Dr. *E.* ſays of the miſchievouſneſs of this, and with great plauſibility, p. 27. depends upon an entire miſtake, namely, that the leader of a claſs acts juſt like a *Romiſh prieſt*; and that the inquiries made in a claſs are of the ſame kind with thoſe made in *auricular confeſſion*. It all therefore falls to the ground at once, when it is obſerved, that there is no reſemblance at all, either between the *leader* and the *prieſt*, or between the inquiries made by one and by the other.

It is true, that the leader " ſees each perſon once a week, to inquire how their ſouls proſper?" And that when they meet, " the leader or teacher aſks each a few queſtions relating to the preſent ſituation of their minds." So then, that *queſtions* are actually aſked, yea, and *inquiries* made, cannot be denied. But what kind of queſtions or inquiries? None that expoſe the anſwerer

ſwerer to any danger: none that they would ſcruple to anſwer before Dr. *E.* or any other perſon that fears God.

VII. But you "form a church within a church, whoſe members in *South-Britain* profeſs to belong to the church of *England*, and thoſe in *North-Britain* to the church of *Scotland*, while yet they are inſpected and governed by teachers who are ſent, continued, or removed by Mr. *W.*" p. 3.

All this is, in a certain ſenſe, very true. But let us ſee what all this amounts to.

You "form a church within a church:" that is, you raiſe up and join together witneſſes of real Chriſtianity, not among Mahometans and Pagans, but *within a church* by law eſtabliſhed.

Certainly ſo. And that church, if ſhe knew her own intereſt, would ſee ſhe is much obliged to us for ſo doing. "But the Methodiſts in *South-Britain* profeſs to belong to the church of *England*." They profeſs the truth: for they do belong to it; that is, all who did ſo before the change was wrought, not in their external mode of worſhip, but in their tempers and lives. "Nay, but thoſe in *Scotland* profeſs to belong to the church of *Scotland*." And they likewiſe profeſs the truth. For they do belong to it as they did before. And is there any harm in this?

"But they are ſtill inſpected by Mr. *W.* and his preachers." And they think this both their

duty and their privilege: namely, to be ſtill inſtructed, and built up in faith and love, by thoſe who were the inſtruments, in God's hand, of bringing them from dead, formal religion, to *righteouſneſs and peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt.* But ſtill thoſe teachers are ſo careful, not to withdraw them from the church to which they belong, not to make any diviſion, that they neither baptize, nor adminiſter the Lord's ſupper. If I were deſirous to form a ſeparate party, I ſhould do both without delay.

VIII. I come now to add a few words, without any preface or ceremony, concerning myſelf.

Dr. *E.* affirms, *firſt*, That I am a very knave; and, *ſecondly*, That I am in a ſtate of damnation.

As to the *firſt*, he ſays, *truth* and *honeſty* chuſe to enter openly and undiſguiſed. *He that entereth not by the door* of a plain, ſimple declaration of his ſentiments, but inſinuates himſelf by *concealing* his opinions, *the ſame is a thief and a robber*, p. 5.

We have more to the ſame purpoſe. "Upon mature reflection, I ſaw no cauſe to flatter myſelf, that I could procure from him ſatisfaction as to what offended me.—He had diſcovered himſelf no novice in the *arts* of ſubtlety and diſguiſe," p. 24.

Again, "I find little elſe than that *ſhifting* at which Mr. *W.* is ſo *ſingularly expert.*" This is as genteel as to ſay, "Sir, you lie:" and it is juſt

juſt as ſtrong an argument. It is indeed mere common-place, with which a man fond of ſuch flowers may embelliſh his page on any occaſion.

But what room is there for it on this occaſion? By God's help, I will ſift this matter thoroughly. And I truſt no gentleman or ſcholar, who weighs what I ſay, will throw this dirt in my face any more.

For ſeveral years I was moderator in the diſputations which were held ſix times a week at *Lincoln College* in *Oxford*. I could not avoid acquiring hereby ſome degree of *expertneſs* in arguing: and eſpecially in diſcerning and pointing out well-covered and plauſible fallacies. I have ſince found abundant reaſon to praiſe God for giving me this *honeſt art*. By this, when men have hedged me in, by what they called *demonſtrations*, I have been many times able to daſh them in pieces: in ſpite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay: and it flew open in a moment. This is the *art* which I have uſed with biſhop *Warburton*, as well as in the preceding pages. When Dr. *E.* twiſted truth and falſhood together, in many of his propoſitions, it was by this *art* I untwiſted the one from the other, and ſhewed juſt how far each was true. At doing this, I bleſs God, I am *expert:* as thoſe will find, who attack me without rhyme or reaſon. But *ſhifting*, *ſubtlety*, and *diſguiſe* I deſpiſe and abhor, full as much as Dr. *E.* And if *he cannot* ſee, that I have anſwered by

Warburton plainly and directly, and so untwisted his arguments, that no man living will be able to piece them together, I believe all unprejudiced men can and are thoroughly convinced of it.

Let any candid man review the last article, and he will see another instance of this. Dr. *E.* had given us a long paragraph, about "forming a church within a church." It is to the same effect with the objection which the warm church-men have often urged against the dissenters in *England*. It sounds extremely plausible, and the parts of it are carefully knit together. But it is not a *gordian* knot: a man moderately *expert* in arguing may untie it. And when the threads are separate, it plainly appears to have been fine, but not strong.

As to the *second* point, I cannot at all complain of Dr. *E.*'s want of openness. He speaks plain and downright: "Seeming strictness of behaviour will not justify those who forget"—"there is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof is *the way of death*." P. 46.

Again. "What claim can he have to genuine *Christianity*, whose professed experience *gives* God *the lie?*" "Say I these things as a man, or saith not the law the same also?" "It is a deadly charity that flatters men with a persuasion that they are in the way of life, whom the scripture pronounces *in a way of destruction*."

Dr.

Dr. *E.*'s charity is of another kind! It is Mr. *Sandiman*'s charity! It reminds me of the charity of an Antinomian in *London*, one, I mean, who was newly recovered from that deluſion: "Sir, ſaid ſhe, laſt week, I would not have been content to *kill* you, if I could not have *damned* you too." I pray God to deliver me from ſuch charity! Charity cruel as the grave!

*But what right have I to complain of Dr. *E.*? He has no obligation to me. My ſpeaking of him every where as I have done, was a point of juſtice, not of friendſhip. I had only the deſire, but not the power of doing him any kindneſs. I could not ſay to him, *Nevertheleſs thou oweſt me thine own ſoul alſo.* I have it not under Dr. *E.*'s hand, as I have under Mr. *Hervey*'s, "Shall I call you my *father*, or my *friend*? You have been both to me." If thoſe related to me by ſo near, ſo tender ties, thus furiouſly riſe up againſt me, how much more may a ſtranger, one of another nation? "*O Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon!*"

POSTSCRIPT.

In his twenty-firſt page, Dr. *E.* ſays, "How far Mr. *Weſley*'s letter was an anſwer to any thing material in the preface, the reader will beſt judge by peruſing

ruſing it." I have annexed it here, that the reader may judge, whether it is not an anſwer to one very material thing, namely, the charge of "*concealing* my ſentiments," for which Dr. *E.* condemns me in the keeneſt manner, and on which very account he makes no ſcruple to pronounce me *a thief and a robber*. I need only premiſe, that I wrote it not out of fear, (as perhaps Dr. *E.* thought) neither in guile; but merely out of love to him, and concern for the cauſe of God. I deſire no *favor* from him or any opponent: do me *juſtice*, and I aſk no more.

EDINBURGH, *April* 24, 1765.

Reverend Sir,

BETWEEN thirty and forty years I have had the world upon me, ſpeaking all manner of evil. And I expected no leſs, as God had called me to teſtify that its deeds were evil. But the children of God were not upon me: nor did I expect they would. I rather hoped they would take knowledge, that all my deſigns, and thought, and care, and labour, were directed to this one point, to advance the kingdom of Chriſt upon earth. And ſo many of them did, however differing from me both in opinions and modes of worſhip. I have the pleaſure to mention Dr. *Doddridge*, Dr. *Watts*, and Mr. *Wardrope*, in particular.

particular. How then was I ſurpized, as well as concerned, that a child of the ſame Father, a ſervant of the ſame Lord, a member of the ſame family, and (as to the eſſence of it) a preacher of the ſame goſpel, ſhould, without any provocation that I know of, declare open war againſt me! I was the more ſurprized, becauſe you had told me ſome months ſince, that you would favour me with a letter. And had this been done, I make no doubt but you would have received full ſatisfaction. Inſtead of this, you uſhered into this part of the world, one of the moſt bitter libels that was ever wrote againſt me: wrote by a dying man, (ſo far as it was wrote by poor, well-meaning Mr. *Hervey,)* with a trembling hand, juſt as he was tottering on the margin of the grave. A great warrior reſigned his crown, becauſe "there ſhould be ſome interval, he ſaid, between fighting and death." But Mr. *Hervey*, who had been a man of peace all his life, began a war not ſix months before he died. He drew his ſword, when he was juſt putting off his body. He then fell on one to whom he had the deepeſt obligations, (as his own letters, which I have now in my hands, teſtify) on one who had never *intentionally* wronged him, who had never ſpoken an unkind word of him, or to him, and who loved him as his own child. O tell it not in *Gath!* The good Mr. *Hervey* (if theſe letters were his) died curſing his ſpiritual Father.

And theſe letters another good man, Mr. ——,

has introduced into Scotland, and warmly recommended. Why have you done this? "Becauſe you have *concealed* your principles, which is palpably *diſhoneſty*."

When I was firſt invited into Scotland, (about fourteen years ago) Mr. *Whitefield* told me, "You have no buſineſs there: for your principles are ſo well known, that if you ſpoke like an angel, none would hear you. And if they did, you would have nothing to do but to *diſpute* with one and another from morning to night."

I anſwered, "If God ſends me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to diſpute: for I will ſtudiouſly avoid controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Chriſtianity. And if any ſtill begin to diſpute, they may: but I will not diſpute with them."

I came. Hundreds and thouſands flocked to hear. But I was enabled to keep my word. I avoided whatever might engender ſtriſe, and inſiſted upon the grand points, the religion of the heart, and ſalvation by faith, at all times, and in all places. And by this means, I have cut off all occaſion of diſpute, from the firſt day to this very hour.

And this you amazingly improve into a fault; conſtrue into a proof of *diſhoneſty*. You likewiſe charge me with holding *unſound principles*, and with ſaying, "right opinions are (ſometimes) no part of religion."

The laſt charge I have anſwered over and over, and

and very lately to biſhop *Warburton*. Certainly had you read that ſingle tract, you would never have repeated that ſtale objection.

As to my principles, every one knows, or may know, that I believe the thirty-firſt article of the church of England. But can none be ſaved who believe this? I know you will not ſay ſo. Meaning, in the main point, juſtification by faith, I have not wavered a moment for theſe ſeven and twenty years. And I allow all which Mr. *Hervey* himſelf contends for, in his entrance upon the ſubject, "Come to Jeſus as a *needy beggar*: hang upon him as a *devoted penſioner*." And whoever does this, I will be bold to ſay, ſhall not periſh everlaſting.

As to your main objection, convince me that it is my duty to preach on controverted ſubjects, predeſtination in particular, and I will do it. At preſent, I think it would be a ſin. I think it would create ſtill more diviſions. And are there not enough already? I have ſeen a book wrote by one who ſtiles himſelf, *Eccleſiæ direptæ et gementis Preſbyter*. Shall *I* tear *eccleſiam direptam et gementem?* God forbid! No; I will, ſo far as I can, heal her breaches. And if you really love her, (as I doubt not you do) why ſhould you hinder me from ſo doing? Has ſhe ſo many friends and helpers left, that you ſhould ſtrive to leſſen their number? Would you wiſh to turn any of her friends, even though weak and miſtaken, into enemies? If you muſt contend,

tend, have you not *Arians, Socinians, Seceders, Infidels*, to contend with? To say nothing of whore-mongers, adulterers, sabbath-breakers, drunkards, common swearers! *O ecclesia gemens!* And will you pass by all these, and single out *me* to fight with? Nay, but *I* will not. I do and will fight with all these, but not with *you*. I cannot: I dare not. You are the son of my Father; my fellow-labourer in the gospel of his dear Son. I love your person: I love your character: I love the work wherein you are engaged. And if you will still shoot at me, (because Mr. *Hervey* has painted me as a monster) even with arrows drawn from bishop *Warburton*'s quiver, (how unfit for Mr. ——'s hand!) I can only say, as I always did before, the Lord Jesus bless you in your soul, in your body, in your relations, in your work, in whatever tends to his own glory!

I am, dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY.

A LETTER TO THE Rev. Dr. RUTHERFORTH.

Rev. Sir, MARCH 28, 1768.

I. 1. YOUR charges, publiſhed five years ago, I did not ſee till yeſterday. In the fourth I am unconcerned. The three former I purpoſe now to conſider: and I do it the more chearfully, becauſe they are wrote with ſuch ſeriouſneſs as becomes the importance of the ſubject, and with leſs tartneſs than I am accuſtomed to expect from opponents of every kind.

2. But before I enter on the ſubject, ſuffer me to remove a ſtumbling-block or two out of the way.

way. You frequently charge me with *evaſion:* and others have brought the ſame charge. The plain caſe is this: I have wrote on various heads, and always as clearly as I could. Yet many have miſunderſtood my words, and raiſed abundance of objections. I anſwered them, by explaining myſelf, ſhewing what I did not mean, and what I did. One and another of the objectors ſtretched his throat, and cried out, "Evaſion! Evaſion!" And what does all this outcry amount to? Why exactly thus much. They imagined they had tied me ſo faſt that it was impoſſible for me to eſcape. But preſently the cobwebs were ſwept away, and I was quite at liberty. And I bleſs God I can unravel truth and falſhood, although artfully twiſted together. Of *ſuch evaſion* I am not aſhamed. Let them be aſhamed who conſtrain me to uſe it.

3. You charge me likewiſe, and that more than once or twice, with *maintaining contradictions.* I anſwer, 1. If all my ſentiments were compared together, from the year 1725 to 1768, there would be truth in the charge: for during the latter part of this period, I have relinquiſhed ſeveral of my former ſentiments. 2. During theſe laſt thirty years, I may have varied in ſome of my ſentiments or expreſſions without obſerving it. 3. I will not undertake to defend all the expreſſions which I have occaſionally uſed during this time: but muſt

deſire

desire men of candor to make allowance for those,

Quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

4. It is not strange if among these inaccurate expressions, there are some *seeming* contradictions: especially considering I was answering so many different objectors, frequently attacking me at once: and one pushing this way, another that, with all the violence they were able. Nevertheless, 5. I believe there will be found few, if any, *real* contradictions, in what I have published for near thirty years.

4. I come now to your particular objections. I begin with the subject of your third charge, *assurances:* because what I have to say upon this head, will be comprized in few words. Some are fond of the *expression*, I am not: I hardly ever use it. But I will simply declare, (having neither leisure nor inclination to draw the saw of controversy concerning it) what are my present sentiments with regard to the *thing*, which is usually meant thereby.

* I believe a few, but very few Christians have an *assurance* from God of *everlasting salvation:* and that is the thing which the apostle terms, *the plerophory, or full assurance of hope.*

* I believe more have such an *assurance* of being *now in the favor of God*, as excludes all doubt and fear.

fear. And this, if I do not miſtake, the apoſtle means by *the plerophory* or *full aſſurance of faith.*

* I believe a *conſciouſneſs* of *being in the favour of God*, (which I do not term *plerophory*, or *full aſſurance*, ſince it is frequently weakened, nay, perhaps interrupted, by returns of doubt or fear) is the common privilege of Chriſtians, fearing God and working righteouſneſs.

* Yet I do not affirm, there are no exceptions to this general rule. Poſſibly ſome may be in the favour of God, and yet go mourning all the day long. (But I believe this is uſually owing either to diſorder of body, or ignorance of the goſpel-promiſes.)

* Therefore I have not for many years thought a conſciouſneſs of acceptance to be eſſential to juſtifying faith.

And after I have thus explained myſelf, once for all, I think without any evaſion or ambiguity, I am ſure without any ſelf-contradiction, I hope all reaſonable men will be ſatisfied. And whoever *will* ſtill diſpute with me on this head, muſt do it for diſputing ſake.

II. 1. In your firſt charge you undertake to prove, that "Chriſtianity does not reject the aid of human learning." p. 1.

Mr. *B*—— thinks it does. But I am not accountable for him, from whom in this I totally differ. Yet you certainly include *me* when you ſay, "theſe *new reformers* maintain, that every believer

believer who has the gift of utterance, is qualified to preach the gospel." p. 2. I never maintained this. On many occasions I have maintained quite the contrary. I never said, " Human learning is an impediment to a divine, which will keep him from the knowledge of the truth." p. 3. When therefore you say, " The contempt with which *these men* treat human learning," *ib.* you do me much injustice: as likewise when you say, " They agree that human learning is of no use at all to a preacher of the gospel." I do not agree with any who speak thus. Yet you cite my own writings to prove it. *Farther Appeal*, Part III. p. 106. If I say any such thing either there or any where else, let me bear the blame for ever.

2. For my deliberate thoughts on human learning, I appeal to my *serious address to the clergy*. I there lay down *ex professo* the qualifications, the learning in particular, which (as I apprehend) every clergyman who *can* have, *ought* to have. And if any who are educated at the university have it not, they are inexcusable before God and man.

To put this matter beyond dispute, I appeal to something more than words. Can any man seriously think, I despise learning, who has ever heard of the school at *Kingswood?* Especially if he knows, with how much care, and expence, and labour, I have kept it on foot for these twenty years? Let him but read " the rules of

Kingswood

Kingſwood ſchool," and he will urge this objection no more.

3. But you " employ illiterate preachers." I cannot anſwer this better, than by tranſcribing the very page to which you refer.

' It † will eaſily be obſerved, that I do not depreciate learning of any kind. The knowledge of the languages is a valuable talent; ſo is the knowledge of the arts and ſciences. Both the one and the other may be employed to the glory of God, and the good of men. But yet I aſk, where hath God declared in his word, that he cannot, or will not make uſe of men that have it not? Has *Moſes*, or any of the prophets affirmed this? Or our Lord, or any of his apoſtles? You are ſenſible, all theſe are againſt you. You know the apoſtles themſelves, all except St. *Paul*, were ἄνδρες ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται. common, unphiloſophical, unlettered men.'

4. Suffer me to add that paragraph, from which you ſtrangely infer, that I hold learning to be of " no uſe at all to a preacher."

' I am bold to affirm, that theſe unlettered men have help from God for that great work, the ſaving ſouls from death; ſeeing he hath enabled, and doth enable them ſtill, to turn many to righteouſneſs. Thus hath he deſtroyed the wiſdom of the wiſe, and brought to nought the underſtanding of the prudent. When they imagined they had effectually ſhut the door, and blocked up every paſſage,

† My words are marked with ſingle comma's.

paſſage whereby any help could come to two or three preachers, weak in body as well as ſoul; who, they might reaſonably believe would, humanly ſpeaking, wear themſelves out in a ſhort time: when they had gained their point, by ſecuring (as they ſuppoſed) all the men of learning in the nation; he that ſitteth in heaven laughed them to ſcorn, and came upon them by a way they thought not of. Out of the ſtones he raiſed up thoſe who ſhould beget children to *Abraham*. We had no more foreſight of this than you. Nay, we had the deepeſt prejudices againſt it: until we could not but own, that God gave wiſdom from above to theſe unlearned and ignorant men; ſo that the work of the Lord proſpered in their hand, and ſinners were daily converted to God.'

'Indeed, in the one thing which they profeſs to know, they are not ignorant men. I truſt there is not one of them who is not able to go through ſuch an examination, in ſubſtantial, practical, experimental divinity, as few of our candidates for holy orders, even in the univerſity, (I ſpeak it with ſorrow and ſhame, and in tender love) are able to do. But oh! What manner of examination do moſt of thoſe candidates go through? And what proof are the teſtimonials commonly brought (as ſolemn as the form is wherein they run) either of the piety or knowledge of thoſe to whom are intruſted thoſe ſheep which God hath purchaſed with his own blood?'

5. Yet

5. Yet you cite this very paragaph to prove that I " intimate, the help which theſe illiterate men receive from God, is ſuch as will enable them to preach Chriſt's goſpel, without reading the ſcriptures;" p. 9. " Adding, St. *Paul*'s command to *Timothy* is a ſufficient confutation of this groundleſs, or rather impious pretence." I cannot conceive, how you could imagine thoſe words to intimate any ſuch thing. Be this *pretence* whoſe it will, it is none of mine; it never entered into my thoughts.

6. But " there are in the ſcriptures *things hard to be underſtood*. And is *every unlettered mechanic* able to explain them?" p. 11. No ſurely. But may we not likewiſe aſk: Is *every clergyman* able to explain them? You will not affirm it. However " they are the ſafeſt guides, who from their childhood have known the holy ſcriptures, and have diligently and faithfully made uſe of all the helps to underſtand them, which a liberal education has put into their hands; who have *given attendance to reading*, have *meditated on thoſe things*, and have *given themſelves wholly to them*." p. 11.

* Certainly theſe are the ſafeſt guides. But how many, Sir, do you know of *theſe?* Suppoſe there are thirty thouſand clergymen in *England*, can you vouch this for ten thouſand of them? I remember his late grace of *Canterbury* (I mean archbiſhop *Potter*,) was occaſionally ſaying, that on ſearching the records, he could find only three hundred

hundred of the clergy who ſtood out againſt popery in queen *Mary*'s reign. Do you think, the other twenty nine thouſand ſeven hundred were "the ſafeſt guides?" I hope indeed things are mended now. I ſee no reaſon to doubt, but there are among the preſent clergy a far greater number both of learned and pious men. And yet I fear, we cannot count many thouſands now, that anſwer your ſtrong deſcription. May our good Lord increaſe their number, how many ſo ever they be!

* 7. Now I beg leave to aſk a queſtion in my turn. Which do *you* think is the ſafeſt guide, a curſing, ſwearing, drinking clergyman (that ſuch there are you know) or a tradeſman, who has in fact "from his childhood known the holy ſcriptures, and has for five years (to ſay no more, faithfully" and diligently made uſe of all the helps which the *Engliſh* tongue has put into his hands; who has *given attendance to reading*, has *meditated* on *theſe things*, and *given himſelf wholly to them?*" Can any reaſonable man doubt one moment which of theſe is the ſafeſt guide?

* Certainly "thoſe who want *theſe* qualifications," who do not give attendance to reading, who do not meditate on thoſe things, yea and give themſelves wholly to them, are *ignorant and unſtable men*, in a very bad ſenſe of the words. And let them underſtand philoſophy ever ſo well, and be ever ſuch critics in *Greek* and *Hebrew*, "they will pervert the ſcriptures, when they pretend

tend to interpret them," p. 12, and that not only to *their own* deſtruction.

8. But " many of theſe ſtrolling preachers are ſo ignorant, as not to know that the ſcriptures were not written in their mother tongue." p. 8. Indeed they are not: whoever gave you that information, abuſed your credulity: moſt of the travelling preachers in connexion with me, are not ignorant men. As I obſerved before, they know all which they profeſs to know. The languages they do not profeſs to know: yet ſome of them underſtand them well. Philoſophy they do not profeſs to know: yet ſome of them tolerably underſtand this alſo. They underſtand both one and the other better than great part of my pupils at the univerſity did. And yet theſe were not inferior to their fellow collegians of the ſame ſtanding: (which I could not but know, having daily intercourſe with all the under-graduates, either as *Greek* lecturer or moderator.) Nor were theſe inferior to the under-graduates of other colleges.

9. You conclude this charge. For " thoſe whoſe minds are not ſtored with uſeful literature, the wiſdom of the public has provided ſuch guides as are both able and willing to ſhew them the right way." p. 13. Would to God it had! But is it really ſo? Is there ſuch a guide in every pariſh in *England!* Are then all the rectors, vicars and curates therein, " both able and willing" to guide all their pariſhioners to heaven?

heaven? Do not both you, and I, and all the world know, that this is not the caſe? Are there not many, who are utterly unable to guide others; having neither learning nor underſtanding to guide themſelves? Are there not more, who if they are able, are not willing, taking no care, or thought about it? They eat, and drink, and riſe up to play:

"*And leave to tatter'd crape the drudgery of prayer.*"

* Once more. Are there not too many of thoſe guides "whom the wiſdom of the public has provided," who are neither able nor willing to guide others in the right way, being equally void of knowledge and piety? Is it then "the duty of the people to continue in the things which they have learned" from theſe guides? And "to hold faſt the faithful word as they have been taught?" Why, what have they been taught? Juſt nothing. From theſe guides they have learned nothing, nor could learn any thing, either from their precept or example. And are they "then only in danger when they do not follow theſe guides?" If they do follow them, they muſt follow them to hell. O, Sir, why will you conſtrain me to ſhew the nakedneſs of the land? I would far rather ſpread a veil over it. And I heartily wiſh, I may never more be laid under a neceſſity of touching on this unpleaſing ſubject.

* 10. Upon the whole, what I believe concerning learning, as I have again and again declared, is this: that it is *highly expedient* for a guide of ſouls; but not *abſolutely neceſſary:* what I believe to be abſolutely neceſſary is, a faith unfeigned, the love of God and our neighbour, a burning zeal for the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom, with an heart and life wholly devoted to God. Theſe I judge to be neceſſary in the higheſt degree: and next to theſe, a competent knowledge of ſcripture; a ſound underſtanding, a tolerable utterance, and a willingneſs to be as *the filth and off-ſcouring of the world.*

III. 1. You intitle your ſecond charge, "An examination of the doctrine of the *Methodiſts*, concerning *inward feelings*."

I have explained myſelf ſo frequently and ſo largely upon this head already, that I flattered myſelf I ſhould ſcarce have occaſion to do it any more. But as I am ſtill totally miſunderſtood and miſrepreſented, I am under a neceſſity of doing it yet again.

You ſtate the queſtion thus, "Have we any reaſon to believe, that the mind has an *inward feeling*, which will enable it to perceive the ordinary influences of God's Spirit, ſo as to diſcern from whence they come?" p. 15.

I anſwer, 1. The fruit of his *ordinary influences* are love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs, meekneſs. 2. Whoever has theſe, *inward-*

ly

ly feels them. And if he underſtands his bible, he diſcerns from whence they come. Obſerve, what he inwardly feels, is, *theſe fruits themſelves: whence they come* he learns from the bible.

This is my doctrine concerning *inward feelings*, and has been for above theſe forty years. And this is clear to any man of common ſenſe: I appeal to all the world if it is not. Only do not puzzle the cauſe by a cloud of words, and then lay the blame on me.

2. You ſtate the queſtion again, p. 17. "What I mean to affirm is, that while the ſoul is united to ſuch a body, the operations of external things" (ſay, the operations of the Holy Spirit, for of theſe we are talking, and of theſe alone) "upon ſome one or more of theſe organs, excite no *inward feeling*." Nay, nor outward neither. He muſt be a bold man, that will affirm the contrary. If this be all that you mean to affirm, we agree to an hair's breadth.

3. You afterwards open yourſelf farther. "The mind in its preſent ſituation, has no *inward ſenſe*, by which the influence of external cauſes," (the influence of the Holy Spirit) "or the cauſes themſelves," (this is quite another queſtion) "may be felt or diſcerned. It then only perceives them, when they affect the organs of the body, ſo as to raiſe a ſenſation in it by their means." p. 22.

Did ever the moſt illiterate *Methodiſt* talk in ſuch a manner as this? "The mind then only

perceives the influences of the Holy Spirit, when they affect the organs of the body!"

If you say, "I do not mean the Holy Spirit by *exteral cauſes*." Then you mean and say what is nothing to the purpoſe. For your very title confines you to the influences of the Holy Spirit: and you are, or ſhould be, ſpeaking of nothing elſe.

4. You go on. "It is a fundamental principle in the *Methodiſt* ſchool, that all who come into it muſt renounce their reaſon." Sir, are you awake? Unleſs you are talking in your ſleep, how can you utter ſo groſs an untruth? It is a fundamental principle with *us*, That to renounce reaſon is to renounce religion: that religion and reaſon go hand in hand, and that all irrational religion is falſe religion. I therefore ſpeak quite "conſiſtently with my own doctrines," when I caution my followers, 'againſt judging of the ſpirit by which any one ſpeaks, by their own *inward feelings*—becauſe theſe being of a doubtful nature, may come from God, or may not.' You add, "What therefore ſhall we think of theſe *inward feelings?* They cannot be clear perceptions of the cauſe from which theſe affections or ſentiments are derived." Who ſays they are? I never did. *You* cite the words wherein I ſay juſt the contrary. *Whom then doth your arguing reprove?* Do you not *fight as one that beateth the air?*

5. Mr.

5. Mr. *W.* indeed " endeavours to explain away, the doctrine of the Methodists concerning *inward feelings*." p. 25. That is, I plainly tell, what I mean by those expressions. My words run thus. 'By *feeling* I mean, being inwardly conscious of; by the *operations of the Spirit*, I do not mean *the manner* in which he operates, but *the graces* which he operates in a Christian.' And again. 'We believe that love, joy, peace, are inwardly felt, or they have no being: and that men are satisfied they have grace, first by feeling these, and afterwards by their outward actions.'

One might imagine, the controversy was now at an end. No: I am not a jot the nearer. For you go on, " If he and his brethren" (away with *his brethren:* the point lies between *you* and *me*) " mean no more than this, why do they speak of this matter in such language, as makes their disciples pretend to have an inward sense, by which they feel, sometimes the power of God, sometimes the Holy Ghost, sometimes Jesus Christ, and by which they can as clearly discern each of these while he acts upon them, as they can discern outward objects by their bodily senses." p. 26. So now the matter is out! But who are the men? What are their names? And where do they live? If *you* know any who pretend to this, I do not: but I know, they are none of *my* disciples. They never learned it of *me*. I have

three grains of common ſenſe, whether you believe it, or not.

6. But you will pin it upon me, whether I will or no; and that by three paſſages of my own writings. 1. 'Lucy Godſhall felt the love of God, *in an unuſual manner*." She did. I mean, *in an unuſual degree*. And what will you make of this? 2. "When he examined ſome of his diſciples, and they related their '*feeling* the blood of Chriſt running upon their arms, or going down their throats, or poured like water upon their breaſt and heart:' did he tell them, that *theſe circumſtances* were all the dreams of an heated imagination? I did: I told them, that *theſe* three *circumſtances*, and *ſeveral* others of the ſame kind, were mere dreams, though *ſome* of thoſe which they then related, *might be* otherwiſe. I will tell you more: I was ſo diſguſted at them for thoſe dreams, that I expelled them out of the ſociety.

The third paſſage is this. 'We do ſpeak of grace, (meaning thereby the power of God, which worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure) that it is as perceptible to the heart, (while it confirms, refreſhes, purifies, and ſheds the love of God abroad therein) as ſenſible objects are to the ſenſes,' p. 27. I do ſpeak thus. And I mean thereby, that the *comfort* which God adminiſters, not his power diſtinct from it, the *love* and *purity* which he works, not his *act* of working diſtinguiſhed from it, are as clearly diſcernible

cernible by the soul, as outward objects by the senses. And I never so much as dreamed, that any one could find any other meaning in the words.

7. I cannot close this subject of *inward feelings* without recurring to the 20th page of your tract. Here you attempt to prove, that "these preachers confine the influences of God's holy Spirit to themselves and their followers, because, say you, *no one else feels its workings*:" none but they and their followers. Observe: it is not I affirm this but *you*, that "none but Methodists *feel the workings of the Spirit*" But how will you reconcile this assertion with the seventeenth article of our church, which teaches, that all "godly persons *feel in themselves the working of the Spirit* of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things?" It is in this sense, and this only, that I did and do assert, all good men *feel the working of the Holy Spirit*. If any can prove, they do not, I stand condemned: if not, none can condemn me concerning *inward feelings*.

8. You subjoin some reflections on another subject, *bodily emotions* of various kinds. Before we reason upon it, let us state the fact. These outward symptoms are not at all times, nor in all places: for two or three years they were (not constant but) frequent in *London*, *Bristol*, *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, and in a few other places. They sometimes occur still, but not often. And we do

not regard whether they occur or not: knowing that the eſſence of religion, righteouſneſs, peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, is quite independent upon them.

Upon this you aſk, "Are theſe the fruits of the Spirit?" p. 31. I anſwer, No, Whoſoever thought they were? You aſk, 2. "Are theſe the marks whereby we may be aſſured, that they who are thus affected diſcern its workings?" You anſwer for me, "They themſelves do not believe it. Nay, Mr. *W.* declares, it is his opinion, '*Some of theſe agonies are from the devil*; and makes no doubt, but it was *Satan tearing them*, as they were coming to Chriſt,' p. 33. But if I myſelf declare thus, what room was there for the preceding queſtions? Now certainly you muſt be quite ſatisfied. No: you are as far from it as ever! You gravely aſk, "What experienced phyſicians of the ſoul muſt theſe be, who are unable to diſtinguiſh the influence of the Holy Ghoſt, from the tearing of Satan?" Why, Sir, you this inſtant repeated the very words wherein I *do* diſtinguiſh them. "But you aſcribe the ſame ſymptoms ſometimes to the one, and ſometimes to the other." Indeed I do not. I always aſcribe *theſe* ſymptoms to *Satan tearing them*.

9. You add in a marginal note, "Mr. *W.* ſometimes denies, that he conſiders theſe fits as ſigns of the new birth." I always deny it, if you mean by *ſigns* any thing more than ſomething which may accidentally attend it.' Yet "in ſome of his

his writings, he calls thefe fallings and roarings, by the name of *convictions*." He fays, 'Many were wounded deeply; but none were delivered from that painful conviction.' 'Monday 30, two more were in ftrong pain, both their fouls and bodies, being well nigh torn afunder.' Very true: but in which of thefe paffages, do I "call *fallings* and *roarings* by the name of *convictions?* Excufe me: if I cannot diftinguifh God from the devil, I can at leaft diftinguifh the foul from the body. For do I ever confound *bodily diforders* with forrow or *pain of mind?*

10. However "Mr. *W.* fpeaks of thefe at leaft as outward figns, that the new birth "is *working* in thofe that have them." p. 23. I fpeak of them as 'outward fymptoms which have often accompanied the inward work of God.' A peculiar inftance of this I relate in the firft journal, which you are at the pains to tranfcribe. And, as you obferve, "there are many inftances in the fame journal, in which I expreſs myſelf in the fame manner." But what does all this prove? Juft what I faid before, and not one jot more: I fpeak of them as 'outward fymptoms which have often accompanied the inward work of God.' *Often*, I fay, not *always*; not *neceffarily*; they may, or they may not. This work may be without thofe fymptoms, and thofe fymptoms may be without this work.

11. But you fay, "The following account which he writes to one of his correfpondents, will make the matter clear. 'I have feen very many

perſons changed in a moment, from the ſpirit of fear, horror, deſpair, to the ſpirit of love, joy, peace; and from ſinful deſires, till then reigning over them, to a pure deſire of doing the will of God. That ſuch a change was then wrought, appears not from their ſhedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out (theſe are not the fruits, or ſigns, 'whereby I judge) but from the whole tenor of their lives.' p. 33.

Now I ſhould really imagine this paſſage proves juſt the contrary of what you intend. Yea, that it is full and deciſive. "But, ſay you, though he denies theſe to be the fruits by which he judges, that this inward change is wrought, yet he looks upon them as ſigns that it is *working*." Yes, in the ſenſe above explained. While God was inwardly *working*, theſe outward ſigns *often* appeared: nay, almoſt daily in *Briſtol*, during the firſt ſummer which I ſpent there.

12. Upon the whole, I declare once for all (and I hope to be troubled no more upon the ſubject) I look upon ſome of thoſe bodily ſymptoms, to have been preternatural or diabolical: and others to have been effects which in ſome circumſtances naturally followed from ſtrong and ſudden emotions of mind. Thoſe emotions of mind, whether of fear, ſorrow, or joy, I believe were chiefly ſupernatural; ſpringing from the gracious

gracious influences of the Spirit of God, which accompanied his word.

13. I believe this is all the answer I need give to the severe accusation you have brought against me: for which I trust men of candor will discern there was not the least foundation. With respect to the first point, *despising learning*, I am utterly clear. None can bring any proof, or shadow of proof, that I do not highly esteem it. With regard to the *assurance of faith and hope*, I have spoken as clearly as I can; and I trust serious men, who have some experience in religion, will not find much to condemn therein. And with respect to *inward feelings*, whoever denies them in the sense wherein alone I defend them, must deny all the life and power of religion, and leave nothing but a dead, empty form. For take away the love of God and our neighbour, the peace of God and joy in the Holy Ghost, or (which comes to the same) deny that they are felt, and what remains but a poor, lifeless shadow?

* 14. This is what I do, and must contend for. "I thought you had contended for quite another thing." If you had only thought so, or only said so in private conversation, it had been of no great consequence. But it was of consequence, when you not only brought a false accusation against your brother before so venerable an assembly, but also published

it to all the world. Surely the firſt ſtep was enough and more than enough. Was there nothing more important wherewith to entertain the *ſtewards of the myſteries of God*, than the miſtakes, if they really had been ſuch, of the *Methodiſts*, ſo called? Had they no enemies more dangerous than theſe? Were they not in more imminent danger, if of no outward ſin, nothing in their behaviour or converſation unworthy of their calling; yet of neglect, of remiſſneſs, of not laying out all their time, and care, and pains, in feeding the ſheep which Chriſt hath purchaſed with his own blood? Were none of them in danger of levity, of pride, of paſſion, of diſcontent, of covetouſneſs? Were none of them ſeeking the praiſe of men more than the praiſe of God? O Sir, if this was the caſe of any of them, I will not ſay how trifling, how inſignificant, but how miſchievous to theſe, how fatal, how deſtructive muſt a charge of this kind be? By which they were led, not to examine themſelves, to conſider either their own hearts or ways, but to criticiſe on others, on thoſe with whom nine in ten had no manner of concern? Surely ſo ſolemn an opportunity might be improved to far other purpoſes! Even to animate every one preſent, to offer up himſelf a living ſacrifice to God, that ſo he may be ready to be offered up, on the

ſacrifice

facrifice and fervice of his faith: to have one thing only in his eye, to defire to aim at nothing elfe, not honour, not eafe, not money, not preferment; but to fave his own foul and them that hear him.

I am, Reverend Sir,
Your brother and fervant for Chrift's fake,
JOHN WESLEY.

A NAR-

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

Late WORK of GOD,

At and near *Northampton*, in *New-England*.

EXTRACTED FROM

Mr. EDWARDS's letter to Dr. COLEMAN.

1. THE town of *Northampton*, in *New-England*, contains about 200 families. After a more than ordinary licentiousnefs in the people here, a concern for religion began to revive, in the year 1729: but more obfervably in 1733; when there was a general reformation of outward diforders, which has continued ever fince.

2. Soon

2. Soon after, a remarkable concern began to appear, in a little village, three miles from the town. From thence it ſpread to us in ſpring 1734, and increaſed during the ſummer. In autumn I propoſed it to the young people, to ſpend the evenings in ſocial religion; and to that end, to divide themſelves into ſeveral companies, to meet in various parts of the town; which was accordingly done, and the example afterwards imitated by elder people.

3. About this time I began to preach concerning *juſtification by faith alone*. This was attended with a very remarkable bleſſing: the people in general were deeply concerned, and began earneſtly to ſeek acceptance with God and ſalvation in the way of the goſpel. And then it was, in *December*, that the Spirit of God began wonderfully to work among us. A great and earneſt concern about the things of God ran thro' all parts of the town. And the noiſe among the *dry bones* waxed louder and louder: all talk but of eternal things was laid aſide. The converſation in all companies (unleſs ſo far as was neceſſary for the carrying on of worldly buſineſs) was wholly upon religion. The minds of people were ſtrangely taken off from the world: it was treated as a thing of very little importance: men followed their *buſineſs*, only as a part of their duty; the temptation now lying on that hand, to *neglect* worldly affairs, and to ſpend too much time in the immediate exerciſes of religion. And this

this thing was exceedingly misrepresented, by reports spread in distant parts of the land, as tho' the people here had wholly thrown by all business, and spent all their time in reading, hearing and prayer.

4. But tho' people did not ordinarily neglect their business, yet religion was with all sorts the great concern. The thing in their view was the kingdom of heaven, and every one appeared pressing into it. There was scarce a person in the town left unconcerned. The vainest and loosest of all, and those who were used to speak most slightly of inward religion, were now generally in deep convictions. And the work increased daily, so that from day to day, for many months together, might be seen evident instances of sinners brought *out of darkness into marvellous light*.

5. Hence there soon appeared a glorious alteration: so that in the spring and summer following, *anno* 1735, the town seemed to be full of the presence of God. It was never so full of love, and joy, nor yet of distress, as it was then. There were remarkable tokens of God's presence, almost in every house: parents rejoicing over their children as new-born; husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands. *The goings of* God *were then seen in his sanctuary*: our public assemblies were beautiful: the congregation was alive in God's service; every one earnestly intent on the work; every hearer

eager

eager to drink in the word: the assembly in general, from time to time, in tears: Some weeping with sorrow and distress, others with joy and love; and others with pity and tender concern for the souls of their neighbours.

6. In all companies, on whatever occasion persons met, Christ was to be heard of and seen in the midst of them. Our *young people*, when together, were wont to spend the time, in talking of the dying love of Christ, the glorious excellency of his salvation, and his free grace to lost sinners. And even at weddings, there was now no discourse but of religion, and no appearance of any but spiritual mirth.

7. When this work of God began, others round about us seemed not to know what to make of it: and there were many that scoffed at and ridiculed it. But it was very observable of many who occasionally came among us, that what they saw here, soon cured them of such a temper. Strangers were generally surprized, to find things so much beyond what they had heard, and were wont to tell others, that the state of the town could not be conceived by those that had not seen it. And most of them went home with wounded hearts, and with such impressions as never wore off. There were many instances also of persons that came to town on visits or on business, who had not been here long, before they partook of that shower of blessing, and went home rejoicing; till at length the same work began evi-

dently

dently to appear in ſeveral other towns in the the county.

* 8. In the month of *March*, the people in *South-Hadley* began to be ſeized with deep concern about the things of religion; which ſoon became univerſal: and the work of God has been very wonderful *there:* not much, if any thing, ſhort of what it has been here, in proportion to the bigneſs of the place. About the ſame time it began to break forth in the weſt part of *Suffield*, and ſoon ſpread into all parts of the town. It next appeared at *Sunderland*, and ſoon overſpread the town; and I believe was, for a ſeaſon, not leſs remarkable than it was here. About the ſame time, it began to appear in a part of *Deerfield*, called *Green-River*, and afterwards filled the town. It began almoſt to be manifeſt, in the ſouth part of *Hatfield*, in a place called the *Hill*, and after that the *whole town*, in the ſecond week in *April*, ſeemed to be ſeized, as it were at once, with concern about the things of God. There has been alſo a very general awakening at *Weſt-Springfield*, and *Long-Meadow*; and in *Enfield*, there was for a time a general concern amongſt ſome that before had been very looſe perſons. About the ſame time that this appeared at *Enfield*, the Rev. Mr. *Bull* of *Weſtfield* informed me, that there had been a great alteration there, and that more had been done in *one week* than in *ſeven years* before. Something of this work likewiſe appeared in the firſt precinct in *Springfield*, principally

cipally in the *north* and *south* extremes of the *parish*. And in *Hadley* old town, there gradually appeared so much of a work of God, as at another time would have been thought worthy of much notice. For a *short* time there was also a very great and general concern, of the like nature, at *Northfield*. And wherever this concern appeared, it seemed not to be *in vain:* but in every place God brought saving blessings with him, and *his* word, attended with his *Spirit*, returned *not void*. It might well be said at that time in all parts of the county, *Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their windows?*

9. This remarkable *pouring out of the Spirit of* God, which thus extended from one end to the other of this *county*, was not confined to it, but many places in *Connecticut* have partook in the same mercy: the *first parish in Windsor* was thus blest about the same time, while we had knowledge of each other's circumstances. And something considerable of the same work began afterwards in *East-Windsor*, my honoured *father*'s parish, which has *in times past* been a place favoured with mercies of this nature, *above any* on this side of *New-England*, except *Northampton*.

10. There was also the *last* spring and summer a wonderful work of God carried on at *Coventry*. I had opportunity to converse with some of the *Coventry* people, who gave me a very remarkable account of the surprizing *change* that appeared in the most rude and vicious persons there. The like

like was also very great at the same time in a part of *Lebanon*, called the *Crank*, and at *Durham:* and likewise amongst many of the young people in the first precinct in *Stratford.*

Something of this work appeared in several other *towns* in those parts, the last *autumn.* And we have since been acquainted with something very remarkable of this nature at another parish in *Stratford*, called *Ripton*; as also at a part of *Guildford*; at *Mansfield*; at *Tolland*; at *Hebron*; and at *Bolton.* There was also no small effusion of the Spirit of God in the North parish in *Preston*; in the congregation of the Rev. Mr. *Lord*; who, with the Rev. Mr. *Owen* of *Groton*, came up hither in *May*, the last year, on purpose to see the work of God here; and having heard various and contradictory accounts of it, were careful to inform and satisfy themselves: to that end they particularly conversed with many of our people; which they declared to be entirely to their satisfaction; and that the *one half had not been told them.* Mr. *Lord* told me, that when he got home, he informed his congregation of what he had seen, and that it proved the beginning of the same work amongst them, which prevailed till there was a *general* awakening, and many persons remarkably converted.

11. But this shower of divine blessing has been yet more *extensive:* there was no small degree of it in some parts of the *Jerseys*; as I was informed when I was at *New-York*, by some people of the

the *Jerſeys*, whom I ſaw eſpecially in a place called the *Mountains*, under the miniſtry of one Mr. *Croſs*: in another place under the miniſtry of Mr. *Gilbert Tennent*; and alſo at another place, under the miniſtry of a *Dutch Miniſter*, whoſe name, as I remember, was *Freelinghouſa*.

12. This ſeems to have been a very *extraordinary* diſpenſation of Providence: God has in many reſpects gone beyond his uſual and *ordinary way*. The work in this town, and ſome others about us, has been extraordinary on account of the *univerſality* of it, affecting all ſorts, ſober and vicious, high and low, rich and poor, wiſe and unwiſe; it reached the moſt conſiderble families and perſons, to all appearance, as much as others. In former ſtirrings of this nature, the bulk of the *young* people have been greatly affected; but *old* men, and *little children* have been ſo now. Many of the *laſt* have of their own accord, formed themſelves into *religious ſocieties*, in different parts of the town: a looſe, careleſs perſon could ſcarcely find a companion in the whole neighbourhood; and if there was *any one* that ſeemed to remain ſenſeleſs or unconcerned, it was ſpoken of as a *ſtrange* thing.

* 13. This diſpenſation has alſo appeared very extraordinary in the *numbers* of thoſe, on whom we have reaſon to hope it has had a ſaving effect: we have now about 620 *Communicants*, which include almoſt all our adult perſons. The church was very full before; but perſons never

thronged

thronged into it as they do at the prefent time. —Our *facraments* are eight weeks afunder, and I received into our communion about an *hundred* before one facrament, and *four-fcore* of them at one time, whofe appearance when they prefented themfelves together to make an open explicit *profeffion* of Chriftianity, was very affecting to the congregation. I am far from pretending to determine how many have lately been the fubjects of fuch mercy: but if I may be allowed to declare what appears probable in a thing of this nature, I hope more than 300 fouls were brought home to *Chrift* in this town in the fpace of half a year, and about the fame number of males as females; which, by what I have heard Mr. *Stoddard* fay, has not been ufual in years paft, for he obferved that in his time, many more women were converted than men. Thofe of our young people, that are on other accounts moft confiderate, are moftly, as I hope, truly pious. Thofe that were formerly loofer, are generally, to all appearance, become true lovers of God and Chrift. And I hope that by far the greater part of perfons in this town, above 16 years of age, have the faving knowedge of Jefus Chrift; and fo, by what I heard, I fuppofe it is in fome other places, particularly at *Sunderland* and *South-Hadley*.

14. This has alfo appeared to be a very *extraordinary* difpenfation, in that the Spirit of God has extended his influences both to *elderly* perfons and thofe that are *very young*. It has been heretofore

tofore rarely heard, that *any* were converted paſt middle age; but now we have the ſame ground to think, that *many ſuch* have been ſavingly changed, as that *others* have been ſo in more early years. I ſuppoſe there were upwards of *fifty* perſons in this town above 40 years of age; and more than twenty of them above 50, and about *ten* of them above 60, and *two* of them above 70 years of age.

It has heretofore been looked on as ſtrange, when they have been ſavingly wrought upon, in their childhood: but now, near *thirty* were to appearance ſo wrought upon between 10 and 14 years of age, and *two* between 9 and 10, and *one* of about 4 years of age; and becauſe I ſuppoſe this laſt will be moſt difficultly believed, I will hereafter give a particular account of it. There are ſeveral numerous families, in which, we have reaſon to hope that all the children are truly pious, and moſt of them lately become ſo: and there are very few houſes in the whole town, into which ſalvation has not lately come, in one or more inſtances. There are ſeveral negroes, that from what was ſeen in them then, and what is diſcernible in them ſince, appear to have been truly born again in the late remarkable ſeaſon.

15. God has alſo ſeemed to go out of his uſual way in the *quickneſs* of his work. 'Tis wonderful that perſons ſhould be ſo ſuddenly, and yet ſo greatly changed: many have been taken from a looſe and careleſs way of living, and ſeized with ſtrong convictions of their guilt and miſery, and

in

in a very little time old things have paſſed away, and all things have become new with them.

16. God's work has alſo appeared very *extraordinary*, in the *degrees* of the influences of his Spirit, both in the degree of *conviction*, and of *ſaving light*, and *love*, and *joy*, that many have experienced. It has alſo been very extraordinary in the *extent* of it, and its being ſo ſwiftly propogated from town to town. In former times of the pouring out of the Spirit of God on this town, though in ſome of them it was very remarkable, yet it reached no farther than this town, while the neighbouring towns all continued unmoved.

* The work of God's Spirit ſeemed to be at its greateſt height in this town, in the former part of the *ſpring*, in *March* and *April*; at which time it was carried on in ſo wonderful a manner, that ſo far as I can judge, there were, at leaſt, four perſons in a day converted to God, or near thirty in a week, take one with another, for five or ſix weeks together: when God in ſo remarkable a manner took the work into his own hands, there was as much done in a day or two, as at ordinary times, with all our endeavours, and with ſuch a bleſſing as we commonly have, is done in a year.

17. I am very ſenſible how apt many may be to think I am fond of magnifying and aggrandizing the matter; and that, for want of judgment, I take every religious pang, and enthuſiaſtic conceit, for ſaving converſion. And for this reaſon I have

I have forborn to publiſh an account of this great work, though I have often been put upon it; but having now as I judge a ſpecial call ſo to do, I thought it beſt to conceal no part of it, leaving it with God to take care of the credit of his own work: and that diſtant perſons may be the better able to judge for themſelves, I would be a little more large and particular.

18. I therefore proceed to give an account of the *manner* of perſons being wrought upon: and here there is a *vaſt variety*, perhaps as manifold as the ſubjects of operation; but yet in many things there is a *great analogy* in all.

Perſons firſt are awakened into a ſenſe of their miſerable condition by nature, the danger they are in of periſhing eternally, and that it is of great importance to them that they ſpeedily eſcape. Thoſe that before were ſecure and ſenſeleſs, are made ſenſible they were in the way to ruin in their former courſes. *Some* are more ſuddenly ſeized; it may be, by the news of others converſion, or ſomething they hear in public, or in private conference, their conſciences are ſuddenly ſmitten, as if their hearts were pierced through with a dart. *Others* have awakenings that come upon them more gradually, they begin at firſt to be ſomething more thoughtful and conſiderate, ſo as to come to a concluſion in their minds that 'tis their wiſeſt way to improve the preſent opportunity; and have accordingly ſet themſelves ſeriouſly to meditate, on purpoſe to

obtain *convictions* ; and ſo their awakenings have increaſed, till a ſenſe of their miſery has had faſt hold of them. *Others* that, before this time, had been ſomething concerned for their ſalvation, have been made ſenſible that their ſlack and dull way of ſeeking was never like to attain their purpoſe, and ſo have been rouſed up to a greater violence for the kingdom of heaven.

19. Theſe awakenings when they have firſt ſeized on perſons have had two effects : one was, that they have brought them immediately to quit their ſinful practices : when once the Spirit of God began to be ſo wonderfully poured out in a general way thro' the town, people had ſoon done with their old quarrels, backbitings, and intermeddling with other men's matters ; perſons kept much at home ; none went abroad unleſs on neceſſary buſineſs, or on ſome religious account, and every day ſeemed in many reſpects like a ſabbath-day. ——The *other* effect was, that it put them on earneſt application to the means of ſalvation, reading, prayer, meditation, to the ordinances of God's houſe, and private conference : their cry was, *what ſhall we do to be ſaved ?* The place of reſort was now altered, it was no longer the tavern, but the miniſter's houſe, that was thronged far more than ever the tavern had been wont to be.

20. There is a great variety, as to the degree of fear and trouble that perſons are in, before they obtain any comfortable evidences of pardon and

and acceptance. Some are from the beginning carried on with abundantly more hope: fome have had *ten* times leſs trouble of mind than others, in whom yet the iſſue ſeems to be the ſame. Some have had ſuch a ſenſe of the diſpleaſure of God, and the great danger they were in of damnation, that they could not ſleep at nights: and many have ſaid that when they laid down, the thoughts of ſleeping in ſuch a condition have been frightful to them, and they have ſcarcely been free from terror while they were aſleep, and have awaked with fear and diſtreſs ſtill on their ſpirits: and often the concern that has been on their minds, has had a painful influence on their bodies, and given diſturbance to animal nature.

21. The awful apprehenſions perſons have had of their miſery, have for the moſt part been increaſing, as they have approached to deliverance; though they often paſs through many changes, in the frame of their minds: ſometimes they think themſelves wholly ſenſeleſs, and fear that the Spirit of God has left them, and that they are given up to a judicial hardneſs; yet they appear very troubled with that fear, and are in great earneſt to obtain *convictions* again.

Together with thoſe fears, and that exerciſe of mind which is rational, and which they have juſt ground for, they have often ſuffered many needleſs diſtreſſes of thought, in which *Satan* probably has a great hand; and ſometimes the

diſtemper of melancholy has been evidently mixed: one knows not how to deal with ſuch perſons; they turn every thing that is ſaid to them the wrong way; and there is nothing that the devil ſeems to make ſo great a handle of, unleſs it be the real corruption of the heart.

22. But it is remarkable, there has been far leſs of this mixture now than was wont to be in perſons under awakenings at other times; yea, many that before had been exceedingly involved in ſuch difficulties, ſeem now ſtrangely to be ſet at liberty: ſome that had for a long time been entangled with peculiar temptations, of one ſort or other, and unprofitable and hurtful diſtreſſes, were ſoon helped over them, and convictions have been ſucceſsfully carried on in the way to life. And thus *Satan* ſeemed to be reſtrained, till towards the latter end, when God's Spirit was about to withdraw.

Many under great awakenings were concerned, becauſe they thought they were not awakened, but ſleeping upon the brink of hell: and the ſenſe of the need they have to be awakened, grows upon them with their awakenings; ſo that they ſeem to themſelves to be very *ſenſeleſs*, when indeed moſt *ſenſible*. There have been ſome inſtances of perſons that have had as great a ſenſe of their danger and miſery, as their natures could well ſubſiſt under, and yet they have expreſt themſelves much amazed at their own inſenſibility

lity and ſottiſhneſs, in ſuch an extraordinary time as it then was.

Perſons are frequently brought to the borders of deſpair a little before the day dawns in their ſouls: ſome there have been who have had ſuch a ſenſe of God's wrath for ſin, that they have been overborn, and made to cry out under an aſtoniſhing ſenſe of their guilt, wondering that God ſuffers ſuch guilty wretches to live upon earth, and that he doth not immediately ſend them to hell. And ſometimes their guilt does ſo ſtare them in the face, that they are in exceeding terror for fear that God will inſtantly do it. In others theſe terrors do not ſeem to be ſo ſharp when near comfort, as before; but they are led further into their own hearts, to a deeper ſenſe of their own univerſal depravity and deadneſs in ſin.

23. The corruption of the heart diſcovers itſelf various ways in the time of conviction; ſometimes it appears in a great ſtruggle, like ſomething rouzed by an enemy, and *Satan* the old inhabitant ſeems to exert himſelf, like a ſerpent diſturbed and enraged. Many in ſuch circumſtances have felt great envy towards thoſe that are lately converted, and moſt of all towards their acquaintance and companions: indeed ſome have felt many heart-riſings againſt God, and murmurings at his ways of dealing with mankind, and his dealings with themſelves in particular. But it has been much inſiſted on, that perſons ſhould have the utmoſt dread of ſuch thoughts,

which tend exceedingly to quench the Spirit of God. And when ſuch a ſpirit has much prevailed, and perſons have not earneſtly ſtrove againſt it, it has ſeemed to be exceedingly to the hindrance of their ſouls: but in ſome other inſtances, where they have been much terrified at the ſight of ſuch wickedneſs in their hearts, God has brought good out of evil, and made it a means of convincing them of their own deſperate ſinfulneſs, and bringing them off from all ſelf-confidence.

The driſt of the Spirit of God herein has ſeemed evidently to be, to make way for a conviction of their abſolute dependence on his ſovereign power and grace, and the neceſſity of a mediator, by leading them more and more to a ſenſe of their exceeding wickedneſs and guiltineſs in his ſight, and of the pollution and inſufficiency of their own righteouſneſs; to ſhew them that they can in no wiſe help themſelves, and that God would be wholly juſt in rejecting them and all that they do, and in caſting them off for ever: though there be a vaſt variety, as to the manner and diſtinctneſs of perſons convictions of theſe things.

As they are more and more convinced of the corruption and wickedneſs of their hearts, they ſeem to themſelves to grow worſe and worſe, harder and blinder, and more deſperately wicked, inſtead of growing better. Under the ſenſe which the

the Spirit of God gives them of their ſinfulneſs, they often think that they differ from all others; their hearts are ready to ſink with the thought, that they are the worſt of all, and that none ever obtained mercy that were as wicked as they.

* At *firſt*, their conſciences are commonly moſt exerciſed by their outward vicious courſe, or other acts of ſin; but *afterwards* they are more burdened with a ſenſe of heart-ſins, the dreadful corruptions of their nature, their enmity againſt God, the pride of their hearts, their unbelief, their rejection of Chriſt, the ſtubbornneſs and obſtinacy of their wills, and the like. In many, God makes much uſe of their own experience, in the courſe of their awakenings and endeavours after ſaving good, to convince them of their own vile emptineſs and univerſal depravity.

24. Very often under the firſt awakenings, when they are brought to reflect on their paſt lives, and have a terrifying ſenſe of God's anger, they ſet themſelves to walk more ſtrictly, and confeſs their ſins, and perform many religious duties, with a ſecret hope of appeaſing God's anger and making up for the ſins they have committed: and oftentimes, at firſt ſetting out, their affections are moved and they are full of tears in their confeſſions and prayers, which they are ready to make very much of, as though they were ſome atonement, and had power to move correſpondent affections in God too: and hence they are for a while big with expectation of what God

will do for them; and conceive that they grow better a-pace, and shall soon be thoroughly converted. But these affections are but short-lived; they quickly find that they fail, and then they think themselves to be grown worse again; they do not find such a prospect of being soon converted as they thought; instead of being *nearer*, they seem to be *farther off*; their hearts they think are grown harder, and by this means their fears of perishing greatly increase. But though they are disappointed, they renew their attempts again and again; and still as their attempts are multiplied, so are their disappointments; all fails; they see no token of having inclined God's heart to them; they do not see that he hears their prayers at all as they expected he would; and sometimes there have been great temptations arising hence to leave off seeking, and to yield up the case. And as they are still more terrified with fears of perishing, and their hopes of prevailing on God in a great measure fail, sometimes their religious affections have turned into heart-risings against God, because he would not pity them, and seems to have little regard to their distress, and to all the pains they take. They think how soon others have obtained comfort, and those too that were worse than they, and have not laboured so much as they have done; and sometimes fall into dreadful blasphemous thoughts. When they reflect on these wicked workings of heart against God, they have still more

more diſtreſſing apprehenſions of his anger, and it may be fear they have committed the unpardonable ſin, and that God will ſurely now never ſhew mercy to them.

25. But then perhaps by ſomething they read or hear of the infinite mercy of God, and all-ſufficiency of Chriſt for the ſake of ſinners, they have ſome hope renewed; but think as yet they are *not fit* to come to Chriſt; and then ſet themſelves upon a new courſe of endeavours to *make themſelves* better, and ſtill meet with new diſappointments: they are earneſt to enquire what they ſhall do? They do not know but there is ſomething elſe to be done, in order to their obtaining converting grace, that they have never done yet. It may be they hope that they are ſomething better than they were; but the pleaſing dream ſoon vaniſhes again. They find not yet the appearance of any good, but all looks as dark as midnight to them. Thus they wander about from mountain to hill, ſeeking reſt, and finding none: when they are beat out of *one* refuge they fly to *another*, till being broken and ſubdued, God gives them a conviction of their own utter helpleſſneſs and inſufficiency, and diſcovers the true remedy, a knowledge of Chriſt and his goſpel.

* Men that begin to ſeek ſalvation are commonly profoundly ignorant of themſelves; they are not ſenſible how blind they are, and how little they can do *towards* bringing themſelves to

ſee ſpiritual things aright; they are not ſenſible how remote they are from the love of God, and all other holy diſpoſitions. When they ſee unexpected pollution in their own hearts, they go about to waſh their own defilements and make themſelves clean: and they weary themſelves in vain, till God ſhows them it is in vain, and that their help is not where they have ſought it, but elſewhere.

* But ſome continue wandering in a kind of labyrinth, ten times as long as others, before their own experience will convince them of their inſufficiency; and ſo it appears not to be their own experience only, but the influence of God's Spirit: and God has of late abundantly ſhown that he does not need to wait to have men convinced by long and often repeated fruitleſs trials; for in multitudes of inſtances he has made a ſhorter work: he has ſo convinced perſons, and made them ſo ſenſible of their exceeding great vileneſs, and given them ſuch a ſenſe of his wrath againſt ſin, as has quickly overcome all their vain ſelf-confidence, and borne them down into the duſt before a holy and righteous God.

26. There have been ſome who have not had great terrors, but have had a very quick work. Some of theſe that have not had ſo deep a conviction before, have, it may be, much more of it after their converſion. God has appeared far from limiting himſelf to any certain method in his proceedings with ſinners under convictions.

In

In *ſome* inſtances it ſeems eaſy for our reaſoning powers to diſcern the methods of divine wiſdom herein: in *others* his footſteps cannot be traced, and his ways are paſt finding out: and ſome that are *leſs diſtinctly* wrought upon, in what is preparatory to grace, appear *no leſs eminent* afterwards.

There is in nothing a greater difference, in different perſons, than with reſpect to the *time* of their being under trouble; ſome for a few days, and others for months or years. There were many in this town, that had been, before this effuſion of God's Spirit upon us, for years, and ſome for many years, concerned about their ſalvation; and to ſuch a degree as to be very uneaſy, to live an uncomfortable, diſquieted life, without any evidence of a good eſtate, who now have received light; but many of them were ſome of the laſt: they firſt ſaw multitudes of others rejoicing, with ſongs of deliverance in their mouths, who ſeemed wholly careleſs and at eaſe, and in purſuit of vanity, while they had been bowed down with ſolicitude about their ſouls; yea, ſome had lived licentiouſly, and ſo continued till a little before they were converted, and grew up to a holy rejoicing in the infinite bleſſings God had beſtowed upon *them*.

* 27. And whatever miniſter has a like occaſion to deal with ſouls, in a flock under ſuch circumſtances, he will ſoon find himſelf under a neceſſity greatly to inſiſt upon it with them, that

God is under no manner of obligation to ſhew them mercy; and that a man can challenge nothing in *juſtice* from any thing he does before he has believed on *Jeſus Chriſt*. It appears to me, that if I had taught thoſe under trouble any other doctrine, I ſhould have taken the direct courſe to have undone them; I ſhould have directly croſſed what was plainly the driſt of the Spirit of God in his influences upon them; for if they had believed what I ſaid, it would either have promoted careleſſneſs, and ſo put an end to their awakenings, or blocked up their way to that humiliation before the ſovereign Diſpoſer of life and death, whereby God is wont to prepare us for his conſolations: and I have found no diſcourſes more remarkably bleſſed, than thoſe in which the doctrine of God's liberty, with regard to anſwering the prayers, or ſucceeding the pains of men, have been inſiſted on. I never found ſo much immediate fruit of any diſcourſes I have preached, as of ſome from thoſe words, *Rom.* iii. 19. *That every mouth may be ſtopped*; endeavouring to ſhew from thence, that it would be juſt with God were he to caſt us off for ever.

28. Commonly the firſt thing that appears after men have been much awakened, is a conviction of the juſtice of God in their condemnation, in a ſenſe of their own exceeding ſinfulneſs, and the vileneſs of all their performances: in giving an account of this, they expreſſed themſelves very variouſly; ſome, that they ſaw God

God might juſtly beſtow mercy on every perſon in the town, and on every perſon in the world, and damn themſelves to all eternity; ſome, that they ſee that God may juſtly have no regard to all the pains they have taken, and all the prayers they have made; ſome, that they ſee if they ſhould ſeek, and take the utmoſt pains all their lives, God might juſtly caſt them into hell at laſt, becauſe all their labours, prayers, and tears cannot make an atonement for the leaſt ſin, nor merit any bleſſing at the hands of God; ſome have declared themſelves to be in the hands of God, that he can, and may, diſpoſe of them juſt as he pleaſes; ſome, that God may glorify himſelf in their damnation, and they wonder that God has ſuffered them to live ſo long, and has not caſt them into hell long ago.

Some are brought to this conviction by a great ſenſe of their ſinfulneſs, in general, that they are ſuch vile wicked creatures in heart and life; *others* have the ſins of their lives in an extraordinary manner ſet before them, multitudes of them coming juſt then freſh to their memory, and being ſet before them with their aggravations. Some have their minds eſpecially fixed on ſome particular wicked practice they have indulged; others on the corruption of their hearts. Some are deeply convinced by a view they have of the horridneſs of ſome particular exerciſes of corruption, in the time of their awakening, whereby the enmity of the heart againſt God

God has been manifeſted; and others by a ſenſe of the ſin of unbelief, the oppoſition of their hearts to the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, and their obſtinacy in rejecting him and his grace.

29. There is a great deal of difference as to perſons *diſtinctneſs* here; ſome have not ſo clear a ſight of God's juſtice in their condemnation; but yet mention things that plainly imply it. They acknowledge God to be juſt in his threatenings, and that they are deſerving of nothing: and many times, though they had not a ſight of it at the beginning. they have very clear diſcoveries of it afterwards, with great humblings in the duſt before God.

Commonly perſons minds immediately before this diſcovery of God's juſtice are exceeding reſtleſs, and in a kind of ſtruggle and tumult, and ſometimes in mere anguiſh; but generally, as ſoon as they have this conviction, it brings their minds to a calm compoſure. And moſt frequently, though not always, *then* the preſſing weight upon their ſpirits is taken away, and a general hope ariſes, that ſome time or other God will be gracious, even before any diſtinct diſcoveries of mercy. And often they then come to a concluſion within themſelves, that they will lie at God's feet, and wait his time.

30. In many, the firſt conviction of the juſtice of God in their condemnation, which they take particular notice of, and probably the firſt diſtinct conviction of it that they have, does not appear

pear to be forced by mere terrors and convictions; for there is in it a sort of complacency of soul, in the *attribute* of God's justice, as displayed in his threatenings of eternal damnation to sinners. Sometimes at the discovery of it, they can scarce forbear crying out, 'TIS JUST! 'TIS JUST! Some express themselves, that they see the glory of God would *shine bright* in their own condemnation; and they are ready to think that if they are damned, they could take part with God against themselves, and glorify his justice therein.

Some, when in such circumstances, have felt that sense of the excellency of God's justice, against such sinfulness as theirs was, and have had such a submission of mind, together with an exceeding loathing of their own unworthiness, and a kind of indignation against themselves, that they have called it a *willingness to be damned*; though it must be owned they had not clear ideas of damnation, nor does any word in the bible require such self-denial as this. But the truth is, as some have more clearly expressed it, salvation appeared *too good for them: they were worthy of nothing but condemnation*, and they could *not tell how to think of salvation's being bestowed upon them*, fearing it was *inconsistent with the glory of God's majesty, which they had so much contemned and affronted.*

31. That calm of spirit which some have found after their distress, continued some time before any special manifestation of the favour of God.

But

But in others the comfortable view of a merciful God, and a fufficient Redeemer, immediately followed. And in feveral, the firſt ſight of their juſt deſert of hell, and of God's love, were ſo near, they ſeemed to go together.

Theſe gracious diſcoveries are in many reſpects very various; more frequently Chriſt is diſtinctly made the object of the mind, in his all-ſufficiency and willingneſs to ſave ſinners: but ſome have their thoughts more eſpecially fixed on God, in ſome of his glorious attributes manifeſted in the goſpel, and ſhining forth in the face of Chriſt: ſome view the all-ſufficiency of the mercy and grace of God: ſome chiefly the infinite power of God, and his ability to ſave them, and to do all things for them; and ſome look moſt at the truth and faithfulneſs of God. In *ſome*, the truth and certainty of the goſpel in general is the firſt joyful diſcovery they have; in *others*, the certain truth of ſome particular promiſes; in ſome, the grace and ſincerity of God in his invitations, very commonly in ſome particular invitation. Some are ſtruck with the glory and wonderfulneſs of the dying love of Chriſt: and ſome with the ſufficiency and precioufneſs of his blood, as offered to make an atonement for ſin; in ſome the excellency and lovelineſs of Chriſt chiefly engages their thoughts; in ſome his divinity, that he is indeed *the Son of the living* God; and in others, the excellency of the way of ſalvation by Chriſt, and the ſuitableneſs of it to their neceſſities.

Some

Some have an apprehenſion of theſe things ſo given, that it ſeems more natural to them to expreſs it by *ſight* or *diſcovery*; *others* think what they experience better expreſſed by the *realizing convictions*, or a *lively feeling ſenſe of heart*; meaning, as I ſuppoſe, no other difference but what is merely circumſtantial or gradual.

There is, often, in the mind, ſome *particular* text of ſcripture, giving them conſolation; ſometimes a *multitude* of texts, gracious invitations and promiſes flowing in one after another, filling the ſoul more and more with comfort. Comfort is firſt given to ſome while *reading* a portion of ſcripture; but in others it is attended with no *particular ſcripture* at all, either in *reading* or *meditation*. In *ſome*, *many divine things* ſeem to be diſcovered to the ſoul as it were at once; others have their minds eſpecially fixed on ſome *one thing* at firſt, and afterwards a ſenſe is given of others; in *ſome* with a ſwifter, and *others* a ſlower ſucceſſion, and ſometimes with interruptions of much darkneſs.

32. The way that grace ſeems ſometimes firſt to appear after deep humiliation, is in earneſt longings of ſoul after God and Chriſt, to know God, to love him, to be humbled before him, which ariſe from a ſenſe of the ſuperlative excellency of divine things, with a ſpiritual taſte and reliſh of them. Such longings are commonly attended with firm reſolutions to purſue this good for ever, together with a hoping, waiting

diſpoſition.

diſpoſition. Other experiences and diſcoveries ſoon follow, which more clearly manifeſt a change of heart.

* It muſt be confeſt that Chriſt is not always *diſtinctly* and *explicitly* thought of at firſt, (though moſt commonly he is) but only *implicitly*. Thus ſometimes when perſons ſeemed evidently to be ſtript of all their own righteouſneſs, and to have ſtood ſelf-condemned as guilty of death, they have been comforted with a joyful view, that the mercy and grace of God is ſufficient for them; that their ſins, though never ſo great, ſhall be no hindrance to their being accepted; that there is mercy enough in God for the whole world, and the like, when they give no account of any diſtinct thought of Chriſt: but yet it appears that the revelation of the mercy of God in the goſpel, is the ground of this their hope; and that it is indeed the mercy of God through Chriſt, that is diſcovered to them.

* So ſometimes diſconſolate ſouls among us, have been brought to reſt in God, by a ſweet ſenſe of his grace and faithfulneſs in ſome ſpecial invitation or promiſe, in which is no particular mention of Chriſt, nor is it accompanied with any diſtinct thought of him in their minds; but yet it is not received as *out of* Chriſt, but as one of the invitations or promiſes made of God to poor ſinners *through* his Son Jeſus, as it is indeed: and ſuch perſons have afterwards had clear

and

and distinct discoveries of Christ, accompanied with a lively faith and love towards him.

33. Frequently when persons have first had the gospel-ground of relief for lost sinners discovered to them, they have thought nothing at that time of their being converted: only, to see that there is such an all-sufficiency in God, and such plentiful provision made in Christ, after thay have been borne down with a sense of their guilt and fear of wrath, exceedingly refreshes them; the view is joyful to them, as it is in its own nature glorious, and gives them quite new and more delightful *ideas* of God and Christ, and begets in them a strong resolution to give up themselves to God and his Son, and patiently to wait for him.

34. It was very wonderful to see after what manner persons affections were sometimes moved when God suddenly opened their eyes, and let into their minds a sense of the greatness of his grace and fulness of Christ, and his readiness to save. Their joyful surprize has caused their hearts as it were to leap, so that they have been ready to break forth into laughter; tears often at the same time issuing like a flood, and intermingling a loud weeping: and sometimes they have not been able to forbear crying out with a loud voice, expressing their great admiration.

These influences of God's Spirit commonly bring an extraordinary *conviction* of the reality and *certainty* of the great things of religion; (though

(though in some this is much greater, some time after than at first:) they have a sight and taste of the divine excellency that there is in the things of the gospel, which is more to convince them, than reading many volumes of arguments without it. It seems to me that in many instances when the glory of the things of *Christianity* have been set before persons, and they have at the same time seen, and tasted, and felt the divinity of them, they have been as far from doubting of the truth of them, as they are from doubting whether there be a sun, when their eyes are open in the midst of a clear hemisphere. And yet many of them, if one should ask why they believed those things to be true, would not be able well to satisfy the enquirer, and perhaps would make no other answer, but that they see them to be true: but a person may soon be satisfied, by a particular *conversation* with them, that what they mean by such an answer is, that they have intuitively beheld, and immediately felt, most powerful evidence of divinity in them.

35. Some are thus convinced of the truth of the gospel in general, and that the scriptures are the word of God: others have their minds more especially fixed on some great doctrine of the gospel, some particular truths that they are *meditating* on; or are in a special manner convinced of the divinity of the things they are *reading* of in some portion of scripture. Some have such *convictions* in a much more remarkable manner

ner than others. And ſome that never had a ſpecial ſenſe of the *certainty* of divine things impreſſed upon them with ſuch inward evidence, have yet very clear exerciſes of grace, *i. e.* of love to God, repentance and holineſs. And if they be more particularly examined, they appear plainly to have a firm perſuaſion of the reality of divine things ſuch as they had not before. But thoſe that have the moſt clear diſcoveries of divine truth, have them not always in the ſame degree. In a dull frame, things appear dim to what they did before: and though there ſtill remains an habitual ſtrong perſuaſion, yet not ſo as to exclude temptations to unbelief, and all poſſibility of doubting, as before: but then at particular times, by God's help, the ſenſe of things revives, like fire that lay hid in aſhes.

36. I ſuppoſe the grounds of ſuch a *conviction* of the truth of divine things to be juſt and rational, but yet in ſome God makes uſe of their own reaſon much more ſenſibly than in others. Oftentimes perſons have (ſo far as could be judged) received the firſt ſaving *conviction* from reaſoning which they have heard *from the pulpit*; and often in the courſe of reaſoning which they are led into *in their own meditations*.

The arguments are the ſame that they have heard hundreds of times; but *the force of the arguments*, and *their conviction by them*, is altogether new; they come with a new and before unexperienced power; before they *heard it* was ſo,

and

and they *allowed it* to be ſo; but now they ſee it to be ſo indeed. Things now look exceeding plain to them, and they wonder that they did not ſee them before.

They are ſo greatly taken with their new diſcovery, and things appear ſo plain and ſo rational to them, that they are often at firſt ready to think they can convince all men, and are apt to engage in talk with every one they meet with, *almoſt* to this end; and when they are diſappointed, are ready to wonder that their reaſonings make no more impreſſion.

37. They often ſpeak of the things of religion as ſeeming *new* to them; that preaching is a *new* thing; that it ſeems to them they never heard preaching before; becauſe they ſee them in a new light. Here was a remarkable inſtance of an aged woman of above 70 years, who reading in the New Teſtament concerning Chriſt's ſufferings for ſinners, ſeemed to be aſtoniſhed at what ſhe read, as at a thing that was quite *new* to her, inſomuch that at firſt, before ſhe had time to turn her thoughts, ſhe wondered within herſelf ſhe had never heard of it before; but then immediately recollected that ſhe had often heard of it, and read it, but never till now ſaw it as a thing real; and then caſt in her mind, how wonderful this was, that the Son of God ſhould undergo ſuch things for ſinners, and how ſhe had ſpent her time in ungrateful ſinning againſt ſo good a God, and ſuch a Saviour; though ſhe was a perſon,

ſon, as to what was viſible, of a very blameleſs and inoffenſive life: and ſhe was ſo overcome by thoſe conſiderations, that her nature was ready to fail. Thoſe that were about her, and knew not what was the matter, were ſurprized, and thought ſhe was a dying.

38. Many have ſpoken much of their hearts being drawn out in love to God and Chriſt, and their minds being wrapt up in delightful contemplation of the glory and wonderful grace of God, and the excellency and dying love of Jeſus Chriſt, and of their ſouls going forth in longing deſires *after* God *and* Chriſt. Several of our young children have expreſſed much of this, and have manifeſted a willingneſs to leave father and mother, and all things in the world, to be with Chriſt. Some perſons have had ſuch deſires after Chriſt, as to take away their natural ſtrength. Some have been ſo overcome with a ſenſe of his love to ſuch poor, wretched, and unworthy creatures as to weaken the body. Several perſons have had ſo great a ſenſe of the glory of God, and excellency of Chriſt, that nature and life have ſeemed almoſt to ſink under it; and in all probability, if God had ſhewed them a little more of himſelf, it would have diſſolved their frame. And their ſenſe of their own exceeding littleneſs and vileneſs, has been in proportion to their light and joy.

Such perſons have commonly appeared with none of the aſſuming, and ſelf-conceited, and

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ſelf-ſufficient airs of enthuſiaſts; but exceedingly the contrary, being eminent for meekneſs, modeſty, ſelf-diffidence, and a low opinion of themſelves. None are ſo ſenſible of their need of inſtruction, and ſo eager to receive it, as ſome of them: nor ſo ready to think others better than themſelves. And *generally* they have manifeſted a longing to lie low and in the duſt before God; withal complaining of their not being able to lie low enough.

They ſpeak much of the *inexpreſſibleneſs* of what they experience, how their words fail, ſo that they can in no wiſe declare it: of the ſuperlative excellency of that delight of ſoul which they ſometimes enjoy; how a little of it is ſufficient to pay them for all the pains and trouble they have gone through in ſeeking ſalvation: and of the ſenſe which theſe ſpiritual views give them of the vanity of earthly enjoyments, how mean and worthleſs all theſe things appear to them.

19. Many, while their minds have been filled with ſpiritual delights, have as it were forgot their food; their bodily appetite has failed, while their minds have been entertained with *meat to eat that others know not of.* And the light and comfort they enjoy, gives a new reliſh to their common bleſſings, and cauſes all things about them to appear beautiful, ſweet and pleaſant to them: all things abroad, the ſun, moon and ſtars, the clouds and ſky, the heavens and earth, appear as it were with a caſt of divine glory and ſweetneſs upon them. But the ſupreme attention of their minds is to the glorious excellencies

of God and Chriſt, which they have in view; a raviſhing ſenſe of God's love accompanying a ſenſe of his excellency; and of the faithfulneſs of God's promiſes, as they reſpect the future eternal enjoyment of God.

The joy that many of them ſpeak of as that to which none is to be pararelled, is that which they find when they are loweſt in the duſt, emptied moſt of themſelves, and as it were annihilating themſelves before God, when they are nothing, and God is all, as ſeeing their own unworthineſs, depending not at all on themſelves, but alone on Chriſt, and aſcribing all glory to God: then their ſouls are moſt in the enjoyment of ſatisfying reſt; excepting that, at ſuch times, they apprehend themſelves to be not ſufficiently ſelf-abaſed: for then above all times do they long to be lower. Some ſpeak much of the exquiſite ſweetneſs and reſt of ſoul that is to be found in reſignation to God, and humble ſubmiſſion to his will. Many expreſs earneſt longings to praiſe God; but at the ſame time complain they cannot praiſe him as they would do, and they want to have others help them in praiſing him: they want to have *every one* praiſe God, and are ready to call upon *every thing* to praiſe him. They expreſs a longing deſire to live to God's glory, and to do ſomething to his honour; but at the ſame time cry out of their inſufficiency and barrenneſs, that they are *poor impotent creatures, can do nothing of themſelves,*

and are utterly insufficient to glorify their Creator and Redeemer.

40. While God was so remarkably present amongst us by his Spirit, there was no book so delighted in as the bible; especially the book of of *Psalms*, the prophecy of *Isaiah*, and the *New Testament*. Some by reason of their esteem and love to God's word, have at some times been greatly and wonderfully affected at the sight of a bible: and *then* also, there was *no time* so prized as the Lord's-day, and *no place* in this world so desired as God's house. Our converts remarkably appeared united in dear affection to one another, and many have expressed much of that love which they felt to all mankind; and particularly to those that had been least friendly to them. Never, I believe, was so much done in confessing injuries, and making up differences, as the last year. Persons after their own conversion, have commonly expressed an exceeding desire for the conversion of others: some have thought that they should be willing to die for the conversion of any soul, though of one of the meanest of their fellow-creatures, or of their worst enemies; and many have indeed been in great distress with desires and longings for it. This work of God had also a good effect to unite the people's affections to their minister.

There are some persons that I have been acquainted with, but more especially two, that have been swallowed up exceedingly with a sense

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of the awful greatneſs and majeſty of God; and both of them told me to this purpoſe, that if they in the time of it, had had the leaſt fear that they were not at peace with this ſo great a God, they ſhould inſtantly have died.

* 41. But there is an endleſs *variety* in the particular manner and *circumſtances* in which perſons are wrought on, and an opportunity of ſeeing ſo much of ſuch a work of God, will ſhew that God is further from confining himſelf to certain ſteps, and a particular method in his work on ſouls, than ſome imagine. I believe it has occaſioned ſome among us, that were before too ready to make their own experience a rule to others, to be leſs cenſorious, and this is an excellent advantage indeed: that this variety has diſplayed the manifoldneſs and unſearchableneſs of the wiſdom of God, and wrought more *charity* among his people.

42. I think the main ground of doubts and fears in perſons, after their converſion, has been that they have found ſo much corruption remaining in their hearts. At firſt their ſouls were all alive, their hearts were fixed, and their affections flowing; they live above the world, and meet with but little difficulty in religious exerciſes. And they are ready to think it will always be ſo: though they are truly abaſed under a ſenſe of their vileneſs, by reaſon of former ſin, yet they are not then ſufficiently ſenſible what corruption ſtill remains in their hearts; and therefore are

furprized when they find that they begin to be dull and dead, to be troubled with wandering thoughts in the time of public and private worſhip; and to be utterly unable to keep themſelves from them; alſo when they find themſelves unaffected at ſeaſons in which, they think, there is the greateſt occaſion to be affected; and when they feel worldly diſpoſitions working in them, and it may be pride, envy, or ſtirrings of revenge; their hearts are almoſt ſunk with the diſappointment; and they are ready preſently to think that all this they have met with is nothing, and that they are meer hypocrites.

They are ready to argue, that if God had indeed done ſuch great things for them, ſuch ingratitude would be inconſiſtent with it: they cry out of the hardneſs and wickedneſs of their hearts; and ſay there is ſo much corruption, that it ſeems to them *impoſſible that there ſhould be any goodneſs* there: and many of them ſeem to be more ſenſible how corrupt their hearts are, than ever they were before they had faith. But in truth, the caſe is, that now they feel the pain of their own wounds, they have a watchful eye upon their hearts that they do not uſe to have: they take more notice what ſin is there, and ſin is now no more burthenſome to them; they ſtrive more againſt it, and feel more of the ſtrength of it.

They are ſurprized that they ſhould find themſelves ſo different from the *idea* that they gene-

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rally had entertained of believers; for though faith be indeed of a far more excellent nature than they imagined; yet thofe that believe have much more remaining corruption than they thought. They never realized it, that perfons were wont to meet difficulties after they were once converted. But on a return of the influences of the Spirit of God, the light breaks through the cloud, and doubting and darknefs vanifh away.

Perfons are often revived by religious converfation: while they are talking of divine things, *or ever* they are *aware* their *fouls* are carried away into holy exercifes with abundant pleafure. And often while they are relating their paft experiences, the fame experiences are renewed. Sometimes they have fcriptures, one after another, coming to their minds, to anfwer their fcruples and unravel their difficulties, exceeding appofite and proper to their circumftances; by which means their darknefs is fcattered; and often before any new remarkable comforts, efpecially after a long continued deadnefs, there are renewed humblings, in a great fenfe of their own exceeding vilenefs and unworthinefs, as before their firft comforts were beftowed.

Many in the *country* have entertained a mean thought of this great work, from what they have heard of *impreffions* made on perfons *imaginations*. But there have been exceeding great

miſrepreſentations, and innumerable falſe reports concerning that matter. It is not, that I know of, the opinion of any one perſon in the town, that any weight is to be laid on any thing ſeen with the bodily eye: I know the contrary to be a received and eſtabliſhed principle amongſt us. I cannot ſay that there have been no inſtances of perſons that have been ready to give too much heed to uſeleſs *imagination*; but they have been eaſily corrected; and it will not be wondered at, that a congregation ſhould need a guide in ſuch caſes, to aſſiſt them in diſtinguiſhing *wheat* from *chaff*. But ſuch impreſſions on the imagination as have been more uſual, ſeem to me to be no other than what is to be expected in human nature in ſuch circumſtances, and what is the natural reſult of impreſſions on the heart.

I do not ſuppoſe they themſelves imagined that they ſaw any thing with their bodily eyes; but only have had within them *ideas* ſtrongly impreſſed, and, as it were, lively pictures in their minds; as for inſtance, ſome, when in great terrors, through fear of hell, have had lively ideas of a dreadful furnace. When ſome were greatly moved with a ſenſe of the excellency of Chriſt, together with a ſenſe of his glorious ſpiritual perfections, there has riſen in the mind an *idea* of one of glorious Majeſty, and of a ſweet and gracious aſpect: and ſome, when greatly affected with Chriſt's death, had at the ſame time a lively

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idea of Chriſt's hanging upon the croſs, and of his blood running from his wounds; which things will not be wondered at by them that have obſerved how ſtrong affections about temporal matters will excite lively *ideas* of different things in the mind.

There have indeed been ſome few inſtances of *impreſſions* on perſons *imaginations*, that have been myſterious to me, and I have been at a loſs about them; for though it has been exceeding evident to me by many things that appeared in them, both then (when they related them) and afterwards, that they indeed had a great ſenſe of the ſpiritual excellency of divine things accompanying them; yet I have not been able well to ſatisfy myſelf, whether theſe imaginary *ideas* have been more than could naturally ariſe from the ſpiritual ſenſe of things. However, I have uſed the utmoſt caution in ſuch caſes; and great care has been taken both in public and in private to teach perſons the difference between what is *ſpiritual* and what is *imaginary*. I have often warned perſons not to lay the ſtreſs of their hope on any *ideas* of any outward glory, or any external things whatſoever, and have met with no oppoſition in ſuch inſtructions. But it is not ſtrange if ſome weaker perſons, in giving an account of their experiences, have not ſo prudently diſtinguiſhed between the ſpiritual and imaginary part; which thoſe that have not been well affected to religion, might take advantage of.

43. But to give a clearer *idea* of the nature and manner of the operations of God's Spirit, in this wonderful effusion of it, I would give an account of two *particular instances*. The first is an *adult person*, a young woman, whose name was *Abigail Hutchinson*. I pitch upon her especially, because she is now dead, and so it may be more fit to speak freely of her than of living instances; though I am under far greater disadvantages, on other accounts, to give a full and clear narrative of her experiences; nor can any account be given but what has been retained in the memories of her near friends, and some others, of what they have heard her express in her life-time.

She was of a rational, understanding family; there could be nothing in her education that tended to *enthusiasm*, but rather to the contrary extreme. She was before her conversion, to the observation of her neighbours, of a sober and inoffensive conversation: and was a still, quiet, reserved person. She had long been infirm of body, but her infirmity had never been observed at all to incline her to the notional or fanciful, or to occasion any thing of religious melancholy. She was under awakenings scarcely a week, before there seemed to be plain evidence of her being savingly changed.

She was first awakened in the winter, on a *Monday*, by something she heard her brother say of the necessity of being in good earnest in seeking Christ, together with the news of the *conver-*

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ſion of another young woman. This news wrought much upon her, and ſtirred up a ſpirit of envy in her towards this young woman, whom ſhe thought very unworthy to be diſtinguiſhed from others by ſuch a mercy; but withal it engaged her in a firm reſolution to do her utmoſt to obtain the ſame bleſſing; and conſidering with herſelf what courſe ſhe ſhould take, ſhe thought ſhe had not a ſufficient knowledge of the principles of religion: whereupon ſhe reſolved thoroughly to ſearch the ſcriptures; and accordingly immediately began at the beginning of the bible, intending to read it through. She continued thus till *Thurſday*; and then there was a ſudden alteration, by a great increaſe of her *concern*, in an extraordinary ſenſe of her own ſinfulneſs, particularly the ſinfulneſs of her nature, and wickedneſs of her heart, which came upon her (as ſhe expreſſed it) as a flaſh of lightning, and ſtruck her into an exceeding terror. Upon which ſhe left off reading the Bible in courſe as ſhe had begun, and turned to the New Teſtament, to ſee if ſhe could find ſome relief for her diſtreſſed ſoul.

44. Her *great terror*, ſhe ſaid, was, *ſhe had ſinned againſt* God: her diſtreſs grew more and more for three days; until (as ſhe ſaid) ſhe ſaw *nothing but blackneſs of darkneſs before her, and her very fleſh trembled for fear of* God's *wrath. She wondered and was aſtoniſhed at* herſelf, *that ſhe had been ſo concerned for her body, and had ap-*

plied ſo often to phyſicians to heal that, and had neglected her ſoul. Her ſinfulneſs appeared with a very awful aſpect to her, eſpecially in three things, viz. her original ſin, her ſin of murmuring at God's providence, in the weakneſs ſhe had been under, and in want of duty to her parents, though others had looked upon her to excel in dutifulneſs. On *Saturday*, ſhe was ſo earneſtly engaged in reading the bible and other books, that ſhe continued in it, ſearching for ſomething to relieve her, till her eyes were ſo dim that ſhe could not know the letters. Whilſt ſhe was thus engaged in reading, prayer, and other religious exerciſes, ſhe thought of theſe words of Chriſt, wherein he warns us not to be *as the Heathens*, that *think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking*: which, ſhe ſaid, led her to ſee that ſhe had truſted to her own prayers and religious performances, and now ſhe was put to a *nonplus*, and knew not which way to turn herſelf, or where to ſeek relief.

While her mind was in this poſture, her heart, ſhe ſaid, ſeemed to fly to the miniſter for refuge, hoping that he could give her ſome relief. She came the ſame day to her brother, with the countenance of a perſon in diſtreſs, expoſtulating with him, why he had not told her more of her ſinfulneſs, and earneſtly enquiring of him what ſhe ſhould do. She ſeemed that day to feel in herſelf an enmity againſt the bible, which greatly affrighted her. Her ſenſe of her own exceeding

exceeding ſinfulneſs continued increaſing from *Thurſday* till *Monday*; and ſhe gave this account of it, that it had been an opinion, which till now ſhe had entertained, that ſhe was not guilty of *Adam*'s ſin; but that now ſhe ſaw ſhe was guilty of that ſin, and all over defiled by it; and that the ſin which ſhe brought into the world with her, was alone ſufficient to condemn her.

45. On the *ſabbath-day* ſhe was ſo ill that her friends thought it not beſt that ſhe ſhould go to public worſhip, of which ſhe ſeemed very deſirous: but when ſhe went to bed on the *ſabbath-day* night, ſhe took up a reſolution that ſhe would the next morning go to the miniſter. As ſhe awaked on *Monday* morning, a little before day, ſhe wondered within herſelf at the calm ſhe felt in her mind, which was of that kind which ſhe never felt before. As ſhe thought of this, ſuch words as theſe were in her mind, *the words of the Lord are pure words, health to the ſoul, and marrow to the bones*; and then theſe words, *the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin*; which were accompanied with a lively ſenſe of the excellency of Chriſt, and his ſufficiency to ſatisfy for the ſins of the whole world: ſhe then thought of that expreſſion, *it is a pleaſant thing for the eyes to behold the ſun*; which words then ſeemed to her to be very applicable to Jeſus Chriſt. By theſe things her mind was exceeding full of joy. She told her brother in the morning, that ſhe had *ſeen* (i. e. by faith) Chriſt *the laſt night*,

and that she had *really thought that she had not knowledge enough to be converted*; but, says she, God *can make it quite easy*. On *Monday* she felt all day a constant sweetness in her soul. She had a repetition of the same discoveries of Christ three mornings together, that she had on *Monday* morning, and much in the same manner, at each time, waking a little before day; but brighter and brighter every time.

46. At the last time on *Wednesday* morning, while in the enjoyment of a spiritual view of Christ's glory and fulness, her soul was filled with distress for unbelievers, to consider what a miserable condition they were in: and she felt in herself a strong inclination immediately to go forth to warn sinners; and proposed it the next day to her brother to assist her in going from house to house; but her brother restrained her, telling her of the unsuitableness of such a method. She told one of her sisters that day, that she loved *all mankind, but especially the people of* God. Her sister asked her why she loved all mankind? She replied, *because* God *had made them*. After this, there happened to come into the shop where she was at work, three persons that were thought to be lately converted. Her seeing them as they stepped in, so drew forth her love to them, that it overcame her, and she almost fainted: and when they began to talk of the things of religion, it was more than she could bear; they were obliged to cease on that account.

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It was a very frequent thing with her to be overcome with a flow of affection to them that she thought godly, in converfation with them, and fometimes only at the fight of them.

47. She had many extraordinary difcoveries of the glory of God and Chrift; fometimes in fome particular attributes, and fometimes in many. She gave an account that once, as thofe four words paffed through her mind, *WISDOM, JUSTICE, GOODNESS, and TRUTH*, her foul was filled with a fenfe of the glory of each of thefe divine attributes, but efpecially the laft; *TRUTH*, faid fhe, *funk the deepeft!* And therefore as thefe words paffed, this was repeated, *TRUTH, TRUTH!* Her mind was fo fwallowed up with a fenfe of the glory of God's *truth* and other perfections, that fhe faid, *it feemed as tho' her life was going*, and that fhe *faw it was eafy with God to take away* her *life by difcoveries of himfelf.* Soon after this fhe went to a private religious meeting, and her mind was full of a fenfe and view of the glory of God all the time: and when the exercife was ended, fome afked her concerning what fhe had experienced; and fhe began to give them an account; but as fhe was relating it, it revived fuch a fenfe of the fame things, that her ftrength failed; and they were obliged to take her and lay her upon the bed. Afterwards fhe was greatly affected, and rejoiced with thefe words, *Worthy is the Lamb that was flain.*

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48. She had ſeveral days together a ſweet ſenſe of the lovelineſs of Chriſt in his *meekneſs*, which diſpoſed her continually to be repeating over theſe words, *MEEK AND LOWLY IN HEART, MEEK AND LOWLY IN HEART.* She once expreſſed herſelf to one of her ſiſters, to this purpoſe, that ſhe had continued *whole days and whole nights*, in a conſtant raviſhing view of the glory of God and Chriſt, *having enjoyed as much as her life could* bear. Once as her brother was ſpeaking of the dying love of Chriſt, ſhe told him that ſhe had ſuch a ſenſe of it, that the mere mentioning it was ready to overcome her.

* Once, when ſhe came to me, ſhe told how at ſuch and ſuch a time ſhe thought ſhe ſaw as much of God, and had as much joy and pleaſure as was poſſible in this life, and that yet afterwards God diſcovered himſelf far more abundantly, and ſhe ſaw the ſame things more clearly, and in another, and far more excellent and delightful manner, and was filled with a more exceeding ſweetneſs. She likewiſe gave me ſuch an account of the ſenſe ſhe once had from day to day of the glory of Chriſt, and of God, in his various attributes, that it ſeemed to me ſhe dwelt for days together in a kind of *beatific viſion* of God; and ſeemed to have as immediate intercourſe with him, as a child with a father: and at the ſame time, ſhe appeared moſt remote from any high thought of herſelf, and of her own ſufficiency,

ſufficiency; but was like a *little child*, and expreſſed a great deſire to be inſtructed, telling them that ſhe longed very often to come to me for inſtruction, and wanted to live at my houſe, that I might tell her her duty.

* 49. She often expreſſed a ſenſe of the glory of God appearing in the trees, and growth of the fields, and other works of God's hands. She told her ſiſter, that lived near the heart of the town, that ſhe once thought it a pleaſant thing to live in the middle of the town, *but now*, ſays ſhe, *I think it much more pleaſant to ſit and ſee the wind blowing the trees, and to behold in the country what God has made.* She had ſometimes the powerful breathings of the Spirit of God on her ſoul, while reading the ſcripture, and would expreſs a ſenſe that ſhe had of the certain truth and divinity thereof. She ſometimes would appear with a pleaſant ſmile on her countenance; and when her ſiſter took notice of it, and aſked why ſhe ſmiled, ſhe replied, *I am brim-full of a ſweet feeling within!* She often uſed to expreſs how *good and ſweet it* was *to lie low before* God, *and the lower* (ſays ſhe) *the better!* and that it was *pleaſant to think of lying in the duſt, all the days of her life, mourning for ſin.* She was wont to manifeſt a great ſenſe of her own meanneſs and dependence. She often expreſſed an exceeding compaſſion, and pitiful love, which ſhe found in her heart towards perſons that knew not Chriſt; which was ſometimes ſo ſtrong, that as ſhe was

paſſing

paſſing by ſuch in the ſtreets, or thoſe that ſhe feared were ſuch, ſhe would be overcome by the ſight of them. She once ſaid, that ſhe *longed to have the world ſaved*; ſhe wanted, as it were, *to pull them all* to her; ſhe could *not bear to have one loſt*.

50. She had great longings to die, that ſhe might be with Chriſt; which increaſed till ſhe thought ſhe did not know how to be patient to wait till God's time ſhould come. But once when ſhe felt thoſe longings, ſhe thought with herſelf, *If I long to die, why do I go to phyſicians?* Whence ſhe concluded that her longings for death were not well regulated. After this ſhe often put it to herſelf, which ſhe ſhould chooſe, whether to live or die, to be ſick or to be well, and ſhe found ſhe could not tell, till at laſt ſhe found herſelf diſpoſed to ſay theſe words; *I am quite willing to live, and quite willing to die; quite willing to be ſick, and quite willing to be well; and quite willing for any thing that God will bring upon me! And then*, ſaid ſhe, *I felt myſelf perfectly eaſy*, in a full ſubmiſſion to the will of God. She then lamented much, that ſhe had been ſo eager in her longings for death, as it argued want of reſignation to God. She ſeemed henceforward to continue in this reſigned frame till death.

51. After this her illneſs increaſed upon her: and once after ſhe had ſpent the greater part of the night in extreme pain, ſhe awakened out of a little ſleep with theſe words in her heart and mouth;

I am

I am willing to ſuffer for Chriſt's ſake, I am willing to ſpend and be ſpent for Chriſt's ſake, I am willing to ſpend my life, even my very life for Chriſt's ſake! And though ſhe had an extraordinary reſignation with reſpect to life or death, yet the thoughts of death were exceeding ſweet to her. At a time when her brother was reading in *Job*, concerning worms feeding on the dead body, ſhe appeared with a pleaſant ſmile, and being enquired of about it, ſhe ſaid, it was ſweet to her to think of *her* being in ſuch circumſtances. At another time, when her brother mentioned the danger there ſeemed to be that the illneſs ſhe then laboured under might be an occaſion of her death, it filled her with joy that almoſt overcame her. At another time, when ſhe met a company following a corpſe to the grave, ſhe ſaid, it was ſweet to her to think, that they would in a little time follow her in like manner.

52. Her illneſs in the latter part of it was ſeated much in her throat; ſwelling inwardly, filled up the pipe, ſo that ſhe could ſwallow nothing but what was perfectly liquid, and but very little of that, and with great and long ſtrugglings and and ſtranglings, that which ſhe took in, flying out at her noſtrils, till ſhe at laſt could ſwallow nothing at all. She had a raging appetite to food, ſo that ſhe told her ſiſter, when talking with her about her circumſtances, that the worſt bit ſhe threw to her ſwine, would be ſweet to her; but when ſhe ſaw that ſhe could not ſwallow it, ſhe

ſeemed

ſeemed to be as perfectly contented without it as if ſhe had no appetite to it. Others were greatly moved to ſee what ſhe underwent, and were filled with admiration at her unexampled patience. At a time when ſhe was ſtriving in vain to get down a little food, ſomething liquid, and was very much ſpent with it, ſhe looked upon her ſiſter with a ſmile, ſaying, *O ſiſter, this is for my good!* At another time, when her ſiſter was ſpeaking of what ſhe underwent, ſhe told her, that ſhe *lived an heaven upon earth for all that.* She uſed ſometimes to ſay to her ſiſter, under her extreme ſufferings, *It is good to be ſo!* Her ſiſter once aſked her, why ſhe ſaid ſo, *Why*, ſays ſhe, *becauſe God would have it ſo: it is beſt that things ſhould be as God would have them: it looks beſt to me.* After her confinement, as they were leading her from the bed to the door, ſhe ſeemed overcome by the ſight of things abroad, as ſhewing forth the glory of the Being that made them. As ſhe lay on her death-bed, ſhe would often ſay theſe words, God *is my friend!* And once looking upon her ſiſter, with a ſmile, ſaid, *O ſiſter! How good it is! How ſweet and comfortable it is to conſider, and think of heavenly things!*

She expreſſed, on her death-bed, an exceeding longing, *both for perſons in a natural ſtate, that they might be converted, and for believers that they might ſee and know more of God.* And when thoſe that looked on themſelves as unbelievers came to ſee her, ſhe would be greatly moved with compaſſionate

passionate affection. * The same week that she died, when she was in distressing circumstances as to her body, some of the neighbours that came to see her, asked, if she was willing to die? She replied, that she was *quite willing either to live or die*; *she was willing to be in pain*; *she was willing to be so always as she was then, if that was the will of God.* She *willed what God willed.* They asked her whether she was willing to die that night? She answered, *Yes, if it be* God's *will.* And seemed to speak all with that perfect composure of spirit, and with such a chearful and pleasant countenance, that it filled them with admiration.

53. She was very weak a considerable time before she died, having pined away with famine and thirst, so that her flesh seemed to be dried upon her bones; and therefore could say but little, and manifested her mind very much by signs. She said she had *matter enough* to fill up *all her time with talk, if she had but strength.* A few days before her death, some asked her, whether she was *afraid to die*; she answered to this purpose, that she had not the least degree of fear of death, they asked her *why* she would *be so confident?* She answered, *If I should say otherwise, I should speak contrary to what I know. There is, says she, indeed a dark entry, that looks something dark, but on the other side there appears such a bright shining light, that I cannot be afraid!* She said not long before she died, that she *used to be afraid how* she *should grapple with death;*

death; *but*, ſays ſhe, God *has ſhewed me that he can make it eaſy in great pain.* Several days before ſhe died, ſhe could ſcarcely ſay any thing but juſt *yes*, and *no*, to queſtions that were aſked her; for ſhe ſeemed to be dying for three days together; but ſeemed to continue in a ſweet compoſure of ſoul, without interruption, to the laſt, and died as a perſon that went to ſleep, without any ſtruggling, about noon, on *Friday*, *June* 27, 1743.

54. I proceed to the *other inſtance.* Her name is *Phebe Bartlet*, daughter of *William Bartlet*, I ſhall give the account as I took it from the mouths of her parents, whoſe veracity none that know them doubt of.

She was born in *March*, in the year 1731. About the latter end of *April*, or beginning of *May*, 1735, ſhe was greatly affected by the talk of her brother, who had been converted a little before, at about eleven years of age, and then ſeriouſly talked to her about the great things of religion. Her parents did not know of it at that time, and were not wont, in the counſels they gave to their children, particularly to direct themſelves to her, by reaſon of her being ſo young, and as they ſuppoſed not capable of underſtanding. But after her brother had talked to her, they obſerved her very earneſtly to liſten to the advice they gave to the other children: and ſhe was obſerved very conſtantly to retire, ſeveral times in a day, for ſecret prayer. She grew more and more

more engaged in religion, and was more frequent in her closet; till at last she was wont to visit it five or six times in a day; and was so engaged in it, that nothing would at any time divert her, either by putting it out of her thoughts, or otherwise engaging her inclinations.

* 55. She once of her own accord spake of her unsuccessfulness, in that she could not find God. But on *Thursday*, the last day of *July*, about the middle of the day, the child being in the closet, where she used to retire, her mother heard her speaking aloud; which was unusual, and never had been observed before; and her voice seemed to be as of one exceeding importunate; but her mother could distinctly hear only these words, (spoken in her childish manner, but with extraordinary earnestness,) *Pray, blessed*, Lord, *give me salvation! I PRAY, BEG, pardon of all my sins!* When the child had done prayer, she came out of the closet, and came and sat down by her mother, and cried out aloud. Her mother earnestly asked her several times, what the matter was, before she would make any answer; but she continued exceedingly crying, and wreathing her body to and fro, like one in anguish of spirit. Her mother then asked her whether she was afraid that God would not give her salvation. She then answered, *Yes, I am afraid I shall go to hell!* Her mother then endeavoured to quiet her, and told her she *would not have her cry*, she *must be a good girl, and pray every day, and* she *hoped* God *would*

would give her ſalvation. But this did not quiet her at all, but ſhe continued thus earneſtly crying, and began to ſmile, and preſently ſaid with a ſmiling countenance, *Mother, the kingdom of heaven is come to me!* Her mother was ſurprized at the ſudden alteration and at the ſpeech, and knew not what to make of it, but at firſt ſaid nothing to her. The child preſently ſpake again, and ſaid, *there is another come to me, and there is another, there is three*; and being aſked what ſhe meant, ſhe anſwered, *one is, thy will be done, and there is another, enjoy him for ever*; by which it ſeems, that when the child ſaid *there is three come to me*, ſhe meant three paſſages of the catechiſm that came to her mind.

56. After the child had ſaid this, ſhe retired again into her cloſet; and her mother went over to her brother's, who was next neighbour; and when ſhe came back, the child, being come out of the cloſet, meets her mother with this chearful ſpeech, *I can find God now!* Referring to what ſhe had before complained of, that ſhe could not find God. Then the child ſpoke again, and ſaid, *I love* God! Her mother aſked her, *how well* ſhe loved God, whether ſhe loved God *better than her little ſiſter Rachel.* She anſwered, *yes, better than any thing!* Then her eldeſt ſiſter, referring to her ſaying *ſhe could find* God *now*, aſked her where ſhe could *find* God? She anſwered, *in heaven. Why*, ſaid ſhe, *have you been in heaven? No*, ſaid the child. By this it ſeems

not

not to have been any imagination of any thing ſeen with bodily eyes, that ſhe called God, when ſhe ſaid, I can find God now. Her mother aſked her whether ſhe was *afraid of going to hell?* She anſwered, *yes, I was, but now I ſhan't.* Her mother aſked her whether ſhe thought that God had given her ſalvation; ſhe anſwered, *yes.* Her mother aſked her, *when?* She anſwered, *to-day.* She appeared all that afternoon exceeding joyful. One of the neighbours aſked her, how ſhe felt herſelf? She anſwered, *I feel better than ever I did.* The neighbour aſked her, what made her feel better? She anſwered; God *makes me.* That evening as ſhe lay a-bed, ſhe called one of her little couſins that was preſent in the room, as having ſomething to ſay to him; and when he came, ſhe told him, that *heaven was better than earth.* The next day being *Friday*, her mother aſking her her catechiſm, aſked her *what* God *made* her *for?* She anſwered, *to ſerve him*, and added, *every one ſhould ſerve* God, *and get* Chriſt.

* 57. The ſame day the elder children, when they came home from ſchool, ſeemed much affected with the change in *Phebe*; and her ſiſter *Abigail* ſtanding by, her mother took occaſion to counſel her, now to improve her time to prepare for another world: on which *Phebe* burſt out in tears, and cried out, *poor Nabb!* Her mother told her ſhe would not have her cry, ſhe hoped that God would give *Nabby* ſalvation; but

but that did not quiet her, but ſhe continued earneſtly crying for ſome time; and when ſhe had in a meaſure ceaſed, her ſiſter *Eunice* being by her, ſhe burſt out again, and cried, *poor Eunice!* and cried exceedingly; and when ſhe had almoſt done, ſhe went into another room, and there looked upon her ſiſter *Naomi*, and burſt out again, crying, *poor Amy!* Her mother was greatly affected, and knew not what to ſay. One of the neighbours coming in a little after, aſked her what ſhe had cried for: ſhe ſeemed at firſt backward to tell the reaſon; her mother told her ſhe might tell that perſon, upon which ſhe ſaid, ſhe *cried becauſe* ſhe *was afraid they would go to hell.*

58. At night a miniſter, that was occaſionally in the town, was at the houſe, and talked conſiderably with her of the things of religion; and after he was gone ſhe ſat leaning on the table, with tears running out of her eyes; and being aſked what made her cry, ſhe ſaid it was *thinking about* God. The next day, being *Saturday*, ſhe ſeemed great part of the day to be in a very affectionate frame, had four turns of crying, and ſeemed to endeavour to curb herſelf, and hide her tears, and was very backward to talk of the occaſion of it. On the *ſabbath* day ſhe was aſked whether ſhe believed in God, ſhe anſwered, *yes:* and being told that Chriſt was the Son of God, ſhe made ready anſwer, and ſaid, *I know it.*

From

From this time there has appeared a very remarkable change in the child: ſhe has been very ſtrict upon the ſabbath; and ſeems to long for the ſabbath-day before it comes, and will often in the week-time be enquiring how long it is to the ſabbath-day, and muſt have the days particularly counted over that are between, before ſhe will be contented. And ſhe ſeems to love God's houſe, and is very eager to go thither. When ſhe is in the place of worſhip, ſhe is very far from ſpending her time there as children at her age uſually do, but appears with deep attention. She alſo appears very deſirous at all opportunities to go to private religious meetings; and is very ſtill and attentive at home in prayer-time, and has appeared affected in time of family-prayer. She ſeems to delight much in hearing religious converſation: when I once was there with ſome others that were ſtrangers, and talked to her ſomething of religion, ſhe ſeemed more than ordinarily attentive; and when we were gone, ſhe looked out very wiſhfully after us, and ſaid, *I wiſh they would come again!* Her mother aſked her *why?* Says ſhe, *I love to hear them talk!*

59. She ſeems to have very much of the fear of God before her eyes, and an extraordinary dread of ſin; of which her mother mentioned the following remarkable inſtance. Some time in *Auguſt*, the laſt year, ſhe went with ſome bigger children to get ſome plumbs, in a neighbour's

lot, knowing nothing of any harm in what ſhe did; but when ſhe brought ſome of the plumbs into the houſe, her mother mildly reproved her, and told her that ſhe *muſt not get plumbs without leave, becauſe it was a ſin*; God had *commanded* her *not to ſteal*. The child ſeemed greatly ſurprized, and burſt out into tears, and cried out, *I won't have theſe plumbs!* And turning to her ſiſter *Eunice*, very earneſtly ſaid to her, *Why did you aſk me to go to that plumb-tree? I ſhould not have gone if you had not aſked me.* The other children did not ſeem to be much affected or concerned, but there was no pacifying *Phebe*. Her mother told her ſhe might go and aſk leave, and then it would not be ſin for her to eat them; and ſent one of the children to that end, and when ſhe returned, her mother told her the owner had given leave, now ſhe might eat them and it would not be ſtealing. This ſtilled her a little while; but preſently ſhe broke out again into an exceeding fit of *crying*; her mother aſked her *what* made her *cry again? Why* ſhe cried *now, ſince* they had aſked *leave? What* it was that troubled her now? And aſked her ſeveral times very earneſtly before ſhe made any anſwer, but at laſt ſhe ſaid, *it was BECAUSE IT WAS SIN.* She continued a conſiderable time crying, and ſaid ſhe would not *go again if* Eunice *aſked her an hundred times*; and ſhe retained her averſion to that fruit for a conſiderable time, under the remembrance of her former ſin.

Go. At

60. At ſome time about the middle of the winter, very late in the night, when all were a-bed, her mother perceived that ſhe was awake, and heard her as though ſhe was weeping. She called to her, and aſked her what was the matter; ſhe anſwered with a low voice, ſo that her mother could not hear what ſhe ſaid, but thinking it might be occaſioned by ſome ſpiritual affection, ſaid no more to her, but perceived her to lie awake and to continue in the ſame frame for a conſiderable time. The next morning ſhe aſked her, whether ſhe did not cry the laſt night? The *child* anſwered, *Yes, I did cry a little, for I was thinking about* God *and* Chriſt, *and they loved me.* Her mother aſked her, whether *to think of* God *and* Chriſt's *loving her made her cry?* She anſwered, *Yes, it does ſometimes.*

61. She has often manifeſted a great concern for the good of other ſouls: and has been wont many times affectionately to counſel the other *children.* Once about the latter end of *September*, the laſt year, when ſhe and ſome others of the *children* were in a room by themſelves a huſking *Indian corn*, the *child* after a while came out and ſat by the fire. Her mother took notice that ſhe appeared with a more than ordinary ſerious and penſive *countenance.* At laſt ſhe broke ſilence, and ſaid, I have been talking to *Nabby* and *Eunice.* Her mother aſked her what ſhe had ſaid to them; why, ſaid ſhe, *I told them they muſt pray and prepare to die*, that they had *but a little*

while to live in this world, and they *muſt be always ready.* When *Nabby* came out, her mother aſked her whether ſhe had ſaid that to them; *yes,* ſaid ſhe, *ſhe ſaid that and a great deal more.* At other times the *child* took her opportunities to talk to the children about the great *concern* of their ſouls, ſometimes ſo as to ſet them into tears. She was once exceeding importunate with her mother to go with her ſiſter *Naomi* to pray; her mother endeavoured to put her off; but ſhe pulled her by the ſleeve, and ſeemed as if ſhe would by no means be denied. At laſt her mother told her, that *Amy muſt go and pray herſelf; but,* ſays the child, *ſhe will not go*; and perſiſted earneſtly to beg of her mother to go with her.

She ſtill continues very conſtant in ſecret prayer, ſo far as can be obſerved, (for ſhe ſeems to have no deſire that others ſhould obſerve her when ſhe retires, but ſeems to be a *child* of a reſerved temper) and every night before ſhe goes to bed will ſay her *catechiſm*, and will by no means miſs it; ſhe never forgot it but once, and then, after ſhe was a-bed thought of it, and cried out in tears, *I han't ſaid my catechiſm!* And would not be quiet till her mother aſked her the *catechiſm* as ſhe lay in bed. She ſometimes appears to be in doubt about the condition of her ſoul: but at other times ſhe ſeems to have no doubt, but when aſked replies without heſitation.

62. In

62. In the former part of this great work of God amongſt us, till it got to its height, we were wonderfully bleſſed in all reſpects. *Satan* (as has been already obſerved) ſeemed to be unuſually reſtrained: perſons that before had been involved in melancholy, ſeemed to be as if they were waked out of it; and thoſe that had been entangled with extraordinary temptations, were wonderfully ſet at liberty; and not only ſo, but it was the moſt remarkable time of health that ever I knew ſince I have been in the town. But after this it was otherwiſe. When this work of God appeared to be at its greateſt height, a poor weak man that belongs to the town, being in great ſpiritual trouble, was hurried to cut his throat, and made an attempt, but did not do it effectually. He after this continued a conſiderable time exceedingly overwhelmed with melancholy; but has now of a long time been delivered by the light of God's countenance lifted up upon him.

63. In the latter part of *May*, the Spirit of God gradually withdrew from us, and after this time *Satan* ſeemed to be let looſe, and raged in a dreadful manner. The firſt inſtance wherein it appeared, was a perſon's putting an end to his own life, by cutting his throat. He was a gentleman of more than common underſtanding, of ſtrict morals, religious in his behaviour, and an uſeful honourable perſon in the town; but was of a family that are exceeding prone to melan-

choly, and his mother was killed with it. The news of this extraordinarily affected the minds of the people here, and ſtruck them with aſtoniſhment. After this, multitudes in this, and other towns, ſeemed to have it ſtrongly ſuggeſted to them, and preſſed upon them to do as this perſon had done. And many that ſeemed to be under no melancholy, nor were under any ſpecial trouble of mind, yet had it urged upon them, as if ſomebody had ſpoke to them, *cut your own throat, now is a good opportunity: Now! Now!* So that they were obliged to fight with all their might to reſiſt it, and yet no reaſon ſuggeſted why they ſhould do it.

64. After theſe things the inſtances of converſion were rare in compariſon of what they had been, (though that remarkable inſtance of the little child was after this;) and the Spirit of God appeared ſenſibly withdrawing from all parts of the country; but religion remained here, and I believe in ſome other places, the main ſubject of converſation for ſeveral months. And there were ſome turns, wherein God's work ſeemed ſomething to revive, and we were ready to hope that all was going to be renewed again; yet in the main there was a gradual decline of that general, lively ſpirit in religion, which had been before. But as to thoſe that have been converted among us in this time, they generally ſeem to have had an abiding

abiding change wrought on them: I have had particular acquaintance with many of them ſince, and they appear to have a new ſenſe of things, new apprehenſions and views of God, of the divine attributes, and *Jeſus Chriſt*, and the great things of the goſpel; they have a new ſenſe of the truth of them, and they affect them in a new manner, though it is very far from being always alike with them; they feel an inward ardor and burning of heart, the like to which they never experienced before; they have new appetites, new breathings and pantings of heart, *and groanings that cannot be uttered.* There is a new kind of inward labour and ſtruggle of ſoul towards heaven and holineſs.

6ly. Some that before were very rough in their temper and manners, are remarkably ſoftened and ſweetened: and ſome have had their ſouls exceedingly filled and overwhelmed with light, love, and comfort, long ſince the work of God has ceaſed to be ſo remarkably carried on in a general way: and there is ſtill a great deal of religious converſation among young and old; a religious diſpoſition is ſtill maintained amongſt our people, by their upholding frequent private religious meetings, and all ſorts are generally worſhipping God at ſuch meetings, on *ſabbath* nights, and in the evening after our public lecture. Many children in the town ſtill keep up ſuch meetings among themſelves. I

know of no one young perſon in the town that has returned to their former looſeneſs or extravagancy; but we ſtill remain a reformed people, and God has evidently made us a new people.

I cannot ſay there has been no inſtance of any one perſon that has carried himſelf ſo, that others ſhould juſtly be offended; nor am I ſo vain as to imagine that we have not been miſtaken concerning any. And we are not *ſo pure*, but that we have great cauſe to be humbled and aſhamed that we are ſo *impure*; nor *ſo religious*, but that thoſe that watch for our halting may ſee things in us, whence they may take occaſion to reproach *us* and *religion*. But in the main, there has been a great and marvellous work of converſion and ſanctification among the people here.

66. Yet a great part of the country have not received the moſt favourable thoughts of this affair; and to this day many retain a jealouſy concerning it, and prejudice againſt it: I have reaſon to think that the meanneſs and weakneſs of the inſtrument that has been made uſe of in this town, has prejudiced many againſt it: but yet this circumſtance of this great work of God, is analogous to other circumſtances of it; God has ſo ordered the manner of it in many reſpects, as remarkably to ſhew it to be his own peculiar work, and to ſecure

ſecure the glory of it only to his own almighty power and ſovereign grace. And whatever the *circumſtances* and means have been, yet *ſo* hath it pleaſed God to work! And we are evidently a people bleſſed of the Lord! And here, *in this corner of the world*, God dwells, and manifeſts his glory.

THE DISTINGUISHING MARKS OF A WORK OF THE SPIRIT of GOD.

Extracted from Mr. EDWARDS.

1 JOHN iv. 1.

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

1. THE apostolical age was an age of the greatest out-pouring of the Spirit of God that ever was. And that both as to the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and also as to his

his ordinary operations, in convincing, converting, enlightening and ſanctifying the ſouls of men. But as the influences of the true Spirit abounded, ſo counterfeits did alſo then abound: the devil mimicking, both the ordinary and extraordinary influences of the Spirit of God. This made it neceſſary that the church of Chriſt ſhould be furniſhed with ſome diſtinguiſhing marks, by which ſhe might proceed ſafely in judging of ſpirits, and diſtinguiſh the true from the falſe. The giving ſuch rules is the plain deſign of this chapter, where we have this matter expreſly treated of. The apoſtle here, of ſet purpoſe undertakes to ſupply the church of God with ſuch marks of the true Spirit as may be plain and ſafe, and ſurely diſtinguiſhing, and well accommodated to uſe and practice. And that the ſubject might be clearly and ſufficiently handled, he inſiſts upon it throughout the chapter: which makes it wonderful that what is ſaid in this chapter, is no more taken notice of at this time, when that which is ſo remarkable appears; ſuch an uncommon operation on the minds of people; and there is ſuch a variety of opinions concerning it, and ſo much talk about the work of the Spirit.

2. The apoſtle is led to diſcourſe on this ſubject by an occaſional mention of the indwelling of the Spirit, as the ſure evidence of an intereſt in Chriſt, in the laſt verſe of the foregoing chapter. *And he that keepeth his commandments*

dwelleth in him, and he in him; and hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the ſpirit which he hath given us. Whence we may infer, that the deſign in this chaper is not only to give marks whereby to diſtinguiſh the true Spirit from the falſe in his extraordinary gifts, but alſo in his ordinary influences on the minds of his people.

3. The words of the text are an introduction to this diſcourſe, of the diſtinguiſhing ſigns of the true and falſe ſpirit. Before the apoſtle proceeds to lay down theſe ſigns, 1. Here is the duty of trying the ſpirits urged, with a caution annexed, againſt over credulouſneſs: *Beloved, believe not every ſpirit, but try the ſpirits whether they are of God.* 2. The neceſſity of this duty is ſhewn from this, that there were many counterfeits, *becauſe many falſe prophets were gone out into the world.* And theſe did not only pretend to have the Spirit of God in his extraordinary gifts, but alſo to be eminently holy perſons, to have much of his ordinary influences on their hearts. We are therefore to look upon theſe words as a direction to try their pretences in both theſe reſpects.

4. After the apoſtle having thus warned Chriſtians, with reſpect to the trial of ſpirits, he immediately proceeds to give them rules, by which they may ſafely proceed in judging of every thing that has the pretext of being either the ordinary or extraordinary work of the Spirit.

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My deſign therefore is to ſhew what are the true, certain, and diſtinguiſhing evidences of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may proceed ſafely in judging of any operation we find in ourſelves, or ſee in others.

5. And here I would obſerve, that we are to take the ſcriptures as our guide in this and in all caſes. This is the ſtanding rule which God has given to his church, to guide them in all things relating to their ſouls. And doubtleſs that Spirit that indited the ſcriptures knew how to give us good rules, by which to diſtinguiſh his operations from all that is falſely pretended to be from him. And ſeeing he has done this, in the chapter wherein is the text, more fully than any where elſe; in my preſent diſcourſe I ſhall go no where elſe for marks of the trial of ſpirits, but ſhall confine myſelf to thoſe that I find here.

But before I proceed particularly to ſpeak to theſe, I would prepare my way by obſerving what are not ſigns that we are to judge of a work by, whether it be the work of the Spirit of God or no. And eſpecially, what are no evidences that a work wrought among a people, is not the work of the Spirit of God.

6. Firſt, Nothing can certainly be concluded from this, *That the work that appears is carried on in a way very unuſual and extraordinary.* 'Tis no ſign that a work is not the work of the Spirit of God, that it is carried on in ſuch a way as the ſame Spirit has not been wont to carry on his work;

work; provided the difference be such, as may still be comprehended within the limits of those rules which the scriptures have given to distinguish a work of the Spirit of God by. What we have been used to, or what the church of God has been used to, is not a rule by which we are to judge whether a work be the work of God, because there may be new and extraordinary works of God. God has heretofore wrought in an extraordinary manner; he has brought those things to pass that have been new things, strange works: and has wrought in such a manner as to surprize both men and angels: and as God has done thus in times past, so we have no reason to think but that he will do so still. The prophecies of scripture give us reason to think that God has still new things to accomplish, things that have never yet been seen. No deviation from what has hitherto been usual, let it be never so great, is an argument that a work is not the work of the Spirit of God, if it be no deviation from the rule that God has given to judge by. The Spirit of God is sovereign in his operations, and we know that he uses a great variety: and we can't tell how great a variety he may use, within the compass of the rules he himself has fixed. We ought not to limit God where he has not limited himself. If a work be never so different from what has formerly been, yet if it agrees in those things that the word of God has given us as

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the diſtinguiſhing ſigns of a work of his Spirit, that is ſufficient to determine us in its favour.

7. Therefore it is not reaſonable to determine that a work is not the work of God's Spirit, becauſe of the extraordinary degree in which the minds of perſons are influenced. If they have an extraordinary conviction of the dreadful nature of ſin, and a very uncommon ſenſe of the miſery of it, or extraordinary views of the certainty and glory of divine things; and are proportionably moved with very extraordinary affections of fear and ſorrow, deſire, love or joy; or if the change that ſeems to be made in perſons be very ſudden, and the work carried on with very unuſual ſwiftneſs, and the perſons that are thus ſtrangely affected are very many, and many of them are very young; and alſo be very unuſual in many other circumſtances, not infringing upon ſcripture marks of a work of the Spirit; theſe things are no argument that the work is not a work of the Spirit of God.

The extraordinary degree of influence, if in its nature it be agreeable to the rules and marks given in ſcripture, is rather an argument in its favour; for by how much the higher degree that is in, which is in its nature agreeable to the rule, ſo much the more is there of conformity to the rule, and ſo much the more evident is that conformity.

8. There is a great aptneſs in perſons to doubt of things that are ſtrange; eſpecially it is difficult for

for elderly perſons to think that to be right which they have been never uſed to, and have not heard of in the days of their fathers. But if it be a good argument that a work is not from God, becauſe it is very unuſual, then it always was ſo, and was ſo in the apoſtle's days. For the work of the Spirit of God that was wrought then, was carried on in a manner, that in very many reſpects, was altogether new. There were ſuch things then, as neither the *Jews*, then living, nor their fathers, had ever ſeen or heard. Yea, ſuch as never had been ſince the world ſtood: the work was carried on with more viſible and remarkable power than ever had been before; never were there ſeen before ſuch mighty and wonderful effects of the Spirit of God, in ſuch ſudden changes, and ſuch great engagedneſs and zeal in ſuch multitudes; ſuch a great and ſudden alteration in towns, cities and countries; ſuch a ſwift progreſs, and vaſt extent of the work.

And we have reaſon from ſcripture prophecy to ſuppoſe, that at the commencement of the laſt and greateſt out-pouring of the Spirit of God, the manner of the work will be very extraordinary, and ſuch as never has yet been ſeen; ſo that there ſhall be occaſion then to ſay, as in *Iſai.* lxvi. 8. *Who hath heard ſuch a thing? Who hath ſeen ſuch things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Shall a nation be born at once? For as ſoon as Zion travailed, ſhe brought forth her children.* It may be reaſonably expected that the extraordinary

extraordinary manner of the work then, will bear ſome proportion to the very extraordinary events, and that glorious change in the ſtate of the world, God will be about to bring to paſs by it.

9. Secondly, A work is not to be judged of by any *effects on the bodies of men*; ſuch as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies of body, or the failing of bodily ſtrength. The influence the minds of perſons are under, is not to be judged of one way or the other, whether it be from the Spirit of God or no, by ſuch effects on the body; and the reaſon is, becauſe the ſcripture no where gives us any ſuch rule. We cannot conclude that perſons are under the influence of the true Spirit, becauſe we ſee ſuch effects upon their bodies, becauſe this is not given as a mark of the true Spirit: nor, on the other hand, have we any reaſon to conclude, from any ſuch outward appearances, that perſons are not under the influence of the Spirit of God, becauſe there is no rule of ſcripture given us to judge of ſpirits by, that does either expreſly or indirectly exclude ſuch effects on the body: nor does reaſon exclude them. * 'Tis eaſily accounted for from the nature of divine and eternal things, and the nature of man, and the laws of the union between ſoul and body, how a true and proper ſenſe of things ſhould have ſuch effect on the body, even thoſe that are of the moſt extraordinary kind; ſuch as taking away the bodily ſtrength, or throwing the body into great agonies, and extorting loud outcries.

cries. There are none of us but ſuppoſe, that the miſery of hell is ſo dreadful, and eternity ſo vaſt, that if a perſon ſhould have a clear apprehenſion of that miſery as it is, it would be more than his feeble frame could bear; and eſpecially, if at the ſame time he ſaw himſelf in great danger of it, and was utterly uncertain whether he ſhould be delivered from it, yea, and had no ſecurity from it one day or hour. We need not then wonder, that when perſons have a very great ſenſe of that which is ſo amazingly dreadful, and alſo a great view of their own wickedneſs and God's anger, things ſeem to them to forbode immediate deſtruction. We ſee the nature of man to be ſuch, that when he is in danger of ſome calamity that is very terrible to befall him, he is ready upon every occaſion to think that *now* it is coming: as when perſons hearts are full of fear, in time of war, they are ready to tremble at the ſhaking of a leaf, and to expect the enemy every minute, and to ſay within themſelves, *now* I ſhall be ſlain. If we ſhould ſuppoſe that a perſon ſaw himſelf hanging over a great pit, full of fierce and glowing flames, by a thread that he knew to be very weak, and not ſufficient long to bear his weight, and knew that multitudes had been in ſuch circumſtances before, and that moſt of them had fallen and periſhed; and ſaw nothing within reach, that he could take hold of to ſave him; what diſtreſs would he be in? How ready to think that *now* the thread was breaking; *now this minute* he ſhould

ſhould be ſwallowed up in theſe flames? And would not he be ready to cry out in ſuch circumſtances? How much more thoſe that ſee themſelves in ſuch a manner hanging over an infinitely more dreadful pit, or held over it in the hand of God, whom at the ſame time they ſee to be exceedingly provoked? No wonder they are ready to expect every moment when this angry God will let them drop; and no wonder they cry out of their miſery; and no wonder that the wrath of God, when manifeſted but a little to the ſoul, overbears human ſtrength.

* 10. So it may eaſily be accounted for, how a true ſenſe of the glorious excellency of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and of his dying love, ſhould be ſuch as to overcome the bodily ſtrength. We all own, that no man can ſee God and live: and that it is but a very ſmall part of that apprehenſion of the glory and love of Chriſt, which the ſaints in heaven enjoy, that our preſent frame can bear: therefore it is not at all ſtrange that God ſhould ſometimes give his ſaints ſuch foretaſtes of heaven, as to diminiſh their bodily ſtrength.

11. But ſome object againſt ſuch extraordinary appearances, that we have no inſtances of them recorded in the New Teſtament. If this ſhould be allowed, I ſee no force in the objection, ſince neither reaſon, nor any rule of ſcripture excludes ſuch things. I do not know that we have any expreſs mention in the New Teſtament of any perſons weeping, or groaning, or ſighing through

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fear of hell, or a ſenſe of God's anger; but is there any body ſo fooliſh as from hence to argue, that in whomſoever theſe things appear, their convictions are not from the Spirit of God? And the reaſon why we do not argue thus, is, becauſe theſe are eaſily accounted for, from what we know of the nature of man, and from what the ſcriptures inform us in general, concerning the nature of eternal things, and the nature of the convictions of God's Spirit; ſo that there is no need that any thing ſhould be ſaid in particular concerning theſe external, circumſtantial effects. But though they are not particularly recorded, yet there is great reaſon to think, from the general accounts we have, that it could not be otherwiſe: and that that great out-pouring of the Spirit which then was, was not wholly without thoſe extraordinary effects on perſons bodies. The *jaylor*, in particular, ſeems to have been an inſtance of that nature, when he, in the utmoſt diſtreſs and amazement, came trembling, and fell down before *Paul* and *Silas*: his falling down at that time does not appear a deſigned putting himſelf into a poſture of ſupplication; for he ſeems not to have ſaid any thing to them then; but he firſt *brought them out*, and then he ſays to them, *Sirs, what muſt I do to be ſaved?* Acts xvi. 29, 30.

12. Thirdly, It is no argument that an operation on the minds of a people, is not the work of the Spirit of God, *that it occaſions a great ado, and*

and a great deal of noiſe about religion. For though true religion does not delight in the applauſe of men, yet ſuch is human nature, that 'tis morally impoſſible there ſhould be a great and general concern and engagedneſs of mind amongſt a people, and yet but little ſaid or done that ſhould be publicly obſervable; or that it ſhould not cauſe a viſible and open commotion and alteration amongſt that people.

Surely, it is no argument that the minds of perſons are not under the influence of God's Spirit, that they are very much moved. For eternal things are ſo great, and of ſuch vaſt concern, that there is great abſurdity in men's being but moderately moved by them. And when was there ever any ſuch thing ſince the world ſtood, as a people in general being greatly affected, in any affair whatſoever, without noiſe or ſtir? The nature of man will not allow it.

Accordingly we find, that when Chriſt's kingdom came, by that remarkable pouring out of the Spirit in the apoſtle's days, it occaſioned a great ſtir and ado every where. What a mighty oppoſition was there in *Jeruſalem*, on occaſion of that great effuſion of the Spirit there? And ſo what great ado in *Samaria*, *Antioch*, *Epheſus*, *Corinth*, and other places. The affair filled the world with noiſe, and gave occaſion to ſome to ſay of the apoſtles, that *they had turned the world upſide down*, Acts xvii. 6.

* 13. Fourthly,

* 13. Fourthly, It is no argument that an operation on the minds of a people, is not the work of the Spirit of God, *that many who are the ſubjects of it, have great impreſſions on their imaginations.* That perſons have many impreſſions on their imaginations, does not prove that they have nothing elſe. It is eaſy to be accounted for, that there ſhould be much of this nature amongſt a people where a great multitude of all kinds of conſtitutions have their minds engaged with intenſe thought and ſtrong affection about thoſe things that are inviſible. Yea, it would be ſtrange if there ſhould not. We can't think of things inviſible, without a degree of imagination. I dare appeal to any man, whether he is able to fix his thoughts on Chriſt, or the things of another world, without imaginary ideas attending his meditations? And the more engaged the mind is, the more lively and ſtrong will the imaginary idea ordinarily be; eſpecially when the contemplation is attended with any thing of ſurprize. As when the view a perſon has is new, and takes ſtrong hold of the paſſions, either fear or joy; and when the change is ſudden, from a contrary extreme, as from that which was extremely dreadful, to that which is extremely delightful. And it is no wonder that many perſons do not well diſtinguiſh between that which is imaginary, and that which is intellectual and ſpiritual; and that they are apt to lay too much weight on the imaginary part, and are moſt ready

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to ſpeak of *that* in the account they give of their experiences, eſpecially perſons of leſs underſtanding.

14. As God has given us ſuch a faculty as the imagination, and has ſo made us, that we cannot think of things ſpiritual and inviſible, without ſome exerciſe of this faculty, ſo it appears to me, that this is really helpful to the other faculties of the mind, when a proper uſe is made of it, though often, when the imagination is ſtrong, and the other faculties weak, it overbears them. And it appears to me manifeſt in many inſtances, that God hath made uſe of this faculty to truly divine purpoſes; eſpecially in ſome that are more ignorant: he ſeems to condeſcend to their circumſtances, and deal with them as babes; as of old he inſtructed his church while in a ſtate of ignorance and minority, by types and outward repreſentations. I can ſee nothing unreaſonable in ſuch a ſuppoſition. Let others that have much occaſion to deal with ſouls in ſpiritual concerns, judge whether experience do not confirm it.

* 15. Fifthly, It is no ſign that a work wrought on the minds of people is not from the Spirit of God, *that example is made uſe of as a great means of it.* It is ſurely no argument that an effect is not from God, that means are made uſe of in producing it; and it is no more an argument, that this means is made uſe of, than if it was any other means. It is agreeable to ſcripture that perſons ſhould be influenced by one another's

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good example: the ſcripture directs us to ſet good examples to that end, *Matt.* v. 16. 1 *Pet.* iii. 1. 1 *Tim.* iv. 12. *Tit.* ii. 7. and alſo directs us to be influenced by the good examples that others ſet, and to follow them, 2 *Cor.* viii. 1—7. *Heb.* vi. 12. *Phil.* iii. 17. 1 *Cor.* iv. 16. and *chap.* xi. 1. 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 9. 1 *Theſſ.* i. 7. By which it appears, that example is one of God's means; and certainly it is no argument that a work is not the work of God, that God's own means are made uſe of to effect it.

16. And as this is a *ſcriptural* way of carrying on God's work, ſo it is a *reaſonable* way. It is no argument that men are not influenced by reaſon, that they are influenced by example. This way of perſons holding forth truth to one another, has a tendency to enlighten the mind, and to convince reaſon. None will deny, but that for perſons to ſignify things one to another *by words*, may rationally tend to enlighten their minds. But the ſame thing may be ſignified *by actions*, and that more fully and effectually. Words are of no uſe but as they convey our ideas to others; and this, actions, in ſome caſes, may do more fully. There is a language in actions; and in ſome caſes, much more clear and convincing than in words.

It is therefore no argument againſt the goodneſs of the effect, that one affects and ſtirs up another; or that perſons are greatly affected by ſeeing others ſo; yea, though the impreſſion that is made upon them ſhould be only by ſeeing the tokens

tokens of extraordinary affection in others, without hearing them say one word. There may be a language sufficient in their behaviour only, to convey their minds to others, and to signify to them the sense of things they have, more than can possibly be done by words. If a person should see another under some extreme bodily torment, he might receive much more convincing evidence of what he suffered, by his actions in his misery, than he could do by the words of a relator. In like manner, he might receive a greater idea of any thing that is delightful, from the behaviour of one that is in actual enjoyment, than by the narration of another. I desire this matter may be examined by the strictest reason.

17. There never yet was a great revival of religion, but example had a main hand in it. So it was in the time of the reformation, and so it evidently was in that great out-pouring of the Spirit that was in the apostle's days, in *Jerusalem*, and *Samaria*, and *Ephesus*, and other parts of the world; as will be manifest to any one that attends to the accounts we have in the *Acts of the apostles*: as in those days one person was moved by another, so one city or town was influenced by the example of another, 1 *Thess.* i. 7, 8. *So that ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia, for from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad.*

18. Sixthly, It is no ſign, a work which is wrought amongſt a people is not from the Spirit of God, *that many that ſeem to be the ſubjects of it, are guilty of great imprudence and irregularities in their conduct.* It is no wonder at all, that in a mixt multitude of all ſorts, wiſe and unwiſe, young and old, who are under ſtrong impreſſions of mind, there are many that behave imprudently. There are but few that know how to conduct them under vehement affections of any kind; to do ſo requires a great deal of diſcretion, and ſtrength, and ſteadineſs of mind. A thouſand imprudencies will not prove a work not to be the work of the Spirit of God; yea, if there be not only imprudences, but many things prevailing that are irregular, and really contrary to the rules of God's holy word. That it ſhould be thus may be well accounted for from the exceeding weakneſs of human nature, together with the remaining darkneſs and corruption of thoſe that are yet the ſubjects of the ſaving influences of God's Spirit.

We have a remarkable inſtance in the New Teſtament, of a people that partook largely of that great effuſion of the Spirit among whom there nevertheleſs abounded imprudencies and great irregularities; and that is the *Corinthians.* There is ſcarce any church more celebrated in the New Teſtament for large meaſures of the Spirit of God; yet what manifold imprudencies, yea ſinful irregularities, did they run into, at the Lord's ſupper, in other parts

parts of public worſhip, in contention about their teachers, and even in the exerciſe of their extraordinary gifts, though they ſpake and acted by the immediate inſpiration of his Spirit.

19. Nay, if we ſee great imprudences, and even ſinful irregularities in ſome that are employed as great inſtruments, it will not prove it not to be the work of God. The apoſtle *Peter* himſelf, one of the chief inſtruments of ſetting up the Chriſtian church, when he was actually engaged in this work, was guilty of a great and ſinful error in his conduct: of which the apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks, *Gal.* ii. 11, 12, 13. *But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withſtood him to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles, but when they were come, he withdrew, and ſeparated himſelf, fearing them that were of the circumciſion; and the other Jews diſſembled likewiſe with him; inſomuch that Barnabas alſo was carried away with their diſſimulation.* Now if the great pillar of the Chriſtian church was guilty of ſuch an irregularity is it any wonder if other leſſer inſtruments ſhould be guilty of many irregularities?

20. And here in particular, it is no evidence that a work is not the work of God, if many that are the ſubjects of it, or inſtruments to carry it on, are guilty of too great a forwardneſs *to cenſure others as unconverted*, either not duly apprehending the latitude the Spirit of God uſes in the methods of his operations, or for want of making

due allowance for that infirmity and corruption that may be left in the hearts of true believers.

It is obfervable, there never was a time of great reformation, a fpirit of *zeal* in the church of God, but it has been attended with irregularity, running out fome way or other into an undue *feverity*. Thus in the apoſtles days, a great deal of zeal was ſpent about unclean meats, both parties condemning one another, while St. *Paul* had charity for both : *He that eats*, ſays he, *to the Lord he eats, and giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.* So in the church of *Corinth*, they had got into a way of extolling fome miniſters, and cenſuring others, and were puffed up for one againſt another; but yet thefe things were no ſign that the work then carried on, was not the work of God. After this, when religon was ſtill flouriſhing in the world, and a ſpirit of eminent holineſs prevailed, the zeal of Chriſtians run out into a very improper ſeverity, in the exerciſe of church diſcipline towards delinquents. And in that glorious revival of religion, in the time of the reformation, zeal in many inſtances appeared in a very improper ſeverity, and even in a degree of perſecution ; yea, in ſome of the moſt eminent reformers; as in the great *Calvin* in particular: and many were guilty of ſeverely cenſuring others that differed from them in opinion.

21. Seventhly,

21. Seventhly, nor are *many errors in judgment, and some deluſions of Satan intermixed with the work*, any argument that the work in general is not the work of the Spirit of God. If many deluſions of Satan appear at the ſame time that a great religious concern prevails, it is not an argument that the work in general is not the work of God, any more than it was an argument in *Egypt*, that there were no true miracles wrought there by the hand of God, becauſe *Jannes* and *Jambres* wrought falſe miracles at the ſame time by the hand of the devil. Yea, the ſame perſons may be the ſubjects of much of the influences of the Spirit of God, and yet in ſome things be led away by the deluſion of the devil. And this is no more a paradox than many other things that are true of real believers, in the preſent ſtate, where grace dwells with ſo much corruption in the ſame heart. Many good men have undoubtedly, in this and other ages, expoſed themſelves to grievous deluſions, by an aptneſs to lay too much weight on impulſes and impreſſions, as if they were immediate revelations from God, to direct them where to go, and what to do.

22. Eighthly, if ſome *fall away into groſs errors, or ſcandalous practices*, it is no argument that the work in general is not the work of the Spirit of God. That there are ſome counterfeits is no argument that nothing is true; ſuch things are always expected in a time of reformation. If we look into church hiſtory, we ſhall find no in-

ſtance of a great revival of religion, but what has been attended with many ſuch things: inſtances of this nature in the apoſtles days were innumerable, both of thoſe that fell away into groſs hereſies, and alſo vile practices. And they were not only private Chriſtians, but teachers and officers, and eminent perſons in the Chriſtian church; and ſome whom God had endowed with miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghoſt.

An inſtance of this nature was *Nicolas*, one of the ſeven deacons, who was looked upon by the Chriſtians in *Jeruſalem*, as a man full of the Holy Ghoſt, and was choſen out of the multitude of Chriſtians to that office, for that reaſon; as you may ſee in *Acts* vi. 3, 5. yet he afterwards fell away, and became the head of a ſect of vile heretics, of groſs practices, called from his name the ſect of *Nicolaitans*, Rev. ii. 6, and 15.

So in the time of the reformation from popery, how great was the number of thoſe that for a while joined with the reformers, that fell away into the groſſeſt and moſt abſurd errors and abominable practices?

And it is particularly obſervable, that in times of great pouring out of the Spirit the number of thoſe that for a while partook in it, have fallen off into extravagant errors, boaſting of high degrees of ſpirituality, and condemning others as carnal. Thus it was with the *Gnoſtics* in the apoſtles times; and thus it was with the ſeveral ſects of *Anabaptiſts* in the time of the reformation.

And

And ſome of the leaders of thoſe wild enthuſiaſts, had been for a while highly eſteemed by the firſt reformers.

23. Ninthly, It is no argument that a work is not from the Spirit of God, *that is it promoted by miniſters inſiſting very much on the terrors of God's holy love, and that with a great deal of* Pathos *and earneſtneſs.* If there be really a hell of never-ending torments, which multitudes are in great danger of, and which the bigger part of men in Chriſtian countries do actually from generation to generation fall into, for want of a ſenſe of the terribleneſs of it, and ſo for want of taking due care to avoid it; then why is it not proper for thoſe that have the care of ſouls to take great pains to make men ſenſible of it? Why ſhould not they be told as much of the truth as can be? If I am in danger of going to hell, I ſhould be glad to know as much as poſſible I can of the dreadfulneſs of it; if I am very prone to neglect due care to avoid it, he does me the beſt kindneſs, that does moſt to repreſent to me the truth of the caſe, that ſets forth my miſery and danger in the livelieſt manner.

I appeal to every one here, whether this is not the very courſe they would take in caſe of any great temporal calamity? If any of you that are heads of families ſaw one of your children in an houſe that was all on fire, that ſeemed inſenſible of its danger, and neglected to eſcape, after you had often called to it, would you go on to

ſpeak in a cold and indifferent manner? Would not you cry aloud, and repreſent the danger it was in, and the folly in delaying it, in the moſt lively manner you was capable of? If you ſhould continue to ſpeak to it only in a cold manner, as you are wont to do in ordinary converſation about indifferent matters, would not thoſe about you begin to think you were bereft of reaſon? It is not the way of mankind, in temporal affairs of great moment, that require earneſt heed and great haſte, to ſpeak to others of their danger, and warn them but a little; and when they do it at all, in a cold indifferent manner. If then we that have the care of ſouls knew what hell was, had ſeen the ſtate of the damned, or by any other means became ſenſible how dreadful their caſe was; and at the ſame time knew that the bigger part of men went thither, and ſaw our hearers in imminent danger, and yet inſenſible of their danger, it would be impoſſible for us to avoid earneſtly ſetting before them the dreadfulneſs of that miſery they were in danger of, and warning them to fly from it.

24. When miniſters preach of hell, and warn ſinners to avoid it in a cold manner, though they may ſay, in words, that it is infinitely terrible; yet they contradict themſelves; for actions, as I obſerved before, have a language as well as words. And at the ſame time that ſuch a preacher's words repreſent the ſinners ſtate as infinitely dreadful, if his manner of ſpeaking

contradict

contradict it, he defeats his own purpose, for the language of his actions is more effectual than the bare signification of his words.

Not that I think the law only should be preached: ministers may preach other things too little. The gospel is to be preached as well as the law, and the law is to be preached only to make way for the gospel. So that a minister ought not to insist so much on the terrors of the law, as to neglect to preach the gospel. But yet the law is much to be insisted on, and the preaching of the gospel is in vain without it.

Indeed some talk of it as an unreasonable thing to frighten persons to heaven. But I think it is reasonable to endeavour to fright persons from hell that stand upon the brink of it, and are just ready to fall into it, and are senseless of their danger. It is a reasonable thing to fright a person out of a house on fire. The word *fright* is commonly used for sudden, causeless fear, or groundless surprize; but surely a just fear, though it be very great, is not to be spoken against under any such name.

25. Having thus shown what are not evidences that a work is not a work of the Spirit,

I proceed in the *second place*, to shew what are the sure, distinguishing, scripture marks of a work of the Spirit of God, by which we may judge of any operation we find in ourselves, or see among a people.

And in this I shall confine myself wholly to

thoſe marks which are given by the apoſtle in this chapter, where this matter is particularly handled, and more fully than any where elſe in the bible. And in ſpeaking to theſe marks, I ſhall take them in the order in which I find them in the chapter.

Firſt, when that Spirit which is at work among a people is obſerved to raiſe their eſteem of that Jeſus who was born of the virgin, and to confirm their minds in the truth of what the goſpel declares, of his being the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; it is a ſure ſign that that Spirit is of God. This ſign the apoſtle gives us in the 2d and 3d verſes. *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confeſſeth that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is of God; and every Spirit that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the fleſh, is not of God.* This implies a confeſſing not only that there was ſuch a perſon who did and ſuffered thoſe things that are recorded of him, but that that perſon was Chriſt, *i. e.* the Son of God, the anointed of God to be Lord and Saviour. That thus much is implied, is confirmed by the 15th verſe, where the apoſtle is ſtill on the ſame ſubject of ſigns of the true Spirit: *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs that Jeſus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.*

So that if the Spirit which is at work among a people is plainly obſerved to work after that manner, as to convince them of Chriſt, and lead them to Chriſt; to confirm their minds in the belief

belief that he is the Son of God, and was ſent of God to ſave ſinners, and that he is the only Saviour, and that they ſtand in great need of him; and to beget in them higher thoughts of him than they uſed to have, and to incline their affections more to him; it is a ſure ſign that it is the true and right Spirit.

26. Secondly, When the Spirit that is at work *operates againſt the intereſt of Satan's kingdom, which lies in eſtabliſhing ſin, and cheriſhing mens worldly luſts*; this is a ſure ſign that it is a true, and not a falſe Spirit. This is given in the 4th and 5th verſes. *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; becauſe greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world, therefore ſpeak they of the world, and the world heareth them.* Here it is evident the apoſtle is ſtill comparing thoſe that are influenced by the two oppoſite kind of ſpirits, the true and the falſe, and ſhewing the difference; the one are of God, and overcome the ſpirit of the world; the other are of the world, and ſpeak and favour the things of the world. The ſpirit of the devil is here called, *he that is in the world.* Chriſt ſays, *My kingdom is not of this world.* But it is otherwiſe with Satan's kingdom; he is *the god of this world.*

So that we may ſafely determine, the Spirit which works after ſuch a manner, as to leſſen mens eſteem of the pleaſures, profits, and honours of the world; to take off their hearts from

theſe things; and to engage them in a deep concern about eternal happineſs, which puts them upon earneſt ſeeking the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, and convinces them of the dreadfulneſs of ſin; I ſay, the Spirit that operates after ſuch a manner, muſt needs be the Spirit of God.

* It is not to be ſuppoſed that Satan would convince men of ſin, and awaken the conſcience. It can no way ſerve his end, to make the candle of the Lord ſhine the brighter, and to open the mouth of that vicegerent of God in the ſoul. Would the devil when he is about to eſtabliſh men in ſin, waken the conſcience to ſee the dreadfulneſs of it, make them ſenſible of their miſery by reaſon of their paſt ſins, and the great need of deliverance from the guilt of them, and more careful, inquiſitive, and watchful to diſcern what is ſinful, and to avoid future ſins; and ſo more afraid of the devil's temptations, and careful to guard againſt them? What do thoſe men do with their reaſon, who ſuppoſe that the Spirit that operates thus, is the ſpirit of the devil?

27. Poſſibly ſome may ſay, that the devil may awaken mens conſciences to deceive them, and make them think they are of God while they are indeed in the gall of bitterneſs. But it may be replied, that the man that has an awakened conſcience is the leaſt likely to be deceived of any man in the world: it is the drowſy, inſenſible,

ble, ſtupid conſcience, that is moſt eaſily blinded. The more ſenſible conſcience is in a diſeaſed ſoul, the leſs eaſily is it quieted without a real healing. The more ſenſible conſcience is made of the dreadfulneſs of ſin, and of the greatneſs of a man's guilt, the leſs likely is he to reſt in his own righteouſneſs, or to be pacified with ſhadows. A man that has been thoroughly terrified with a ſenſe of his danger and miſery, is not eaſily made to believe himſelf ſafe, without good grounds.

To awaken conſcience, and to convince of the evil of ſin, cannot then tend to eſtabliſh ſin, but certainly tends to make way for ſin and Satan's being caſt out. Therefore this is a good argument that the Spirit that operates thus cannot be the ſpirit of the devil; if Chriſt knew how to argue, who told the *Phariſees*, that ſuppoſed the Spirit he wrought by was the ſpirit of the devil, *that Satan would not caſt out Satan*, Matt. xii. 25, 26.

And therefore, if we ſee perſons made ſenſible of the dreadful nature of ſin, and of the diſpleaſure of God againſt it, earneſtly concerned for their eternal ſalvation, ſenſible of their need of God's help, and engaged to ſeek it in the uſe of the means that God has appointed, we may certainly conclude this is from the Spirit of God; whatever effects this concern has on their bodies, though it cauſes them to cry out aloud, or to ſhriek, or to faint, or though it throws them into

into convulſions, or whatever other way the blood and ſpirits are moved.

The influence of the Spirit of God is yet more abundantly manifeſted, if perſons have their hearts *drawn off* from the world, and *weaned* from the objects of their worldly luſts, and taken off from worldly purſuits by the ſenſe they have of the excellency of divine things, and the affection they have to thoſe ſpiritual enjoyments of another world that are promiſed in the goſpel.

28. Thirdly, That Spirit which operates in ſuch a manner, as to cauſe *in men a greater regard to the holy ſcriptures, and eſtabliſhes them more in their truth and divinity*, is certainly the Spirit of God. This rule the apoſtle gives us in the 6th verſe; *We are of God, he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God, heareth not us: hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the ſpirit of error. We are of God*, that is, "We, "the apoſtles, are ſent forth of God, and ap- "pointed of him, to teach the world, and to deli- "ver that doctrine, thoſe inſtructions that are "to be their rule; therefore *he that knoweth* "*God, heareth us*, &c."——The apoſtle's argument in the verſe equally reaches all that in the ſame ſenſe *are of God*, that is, all thoſe whom God appointed to deliver to his church its rule of faith and practice; all the prophets and apoſtles, whoſe doctrine God had made the foundation on which he has built his church. The devil never would go about to beget in perſons a regard

a regard to that divine word, which God hath given to be the great and ſtanding rule for the direction of his church in all ages. Would the ſpirit of error, in order to deceive men, beget in them an high opinion of the infallible rule, and incline them to think much of it, and be very converſant with it? Would the prince of darkneſs, in order to promote his kingdom of darkneſs, lead men to the ſun? The devil has ever ſhown a mortal hatred towards that holy book, the bible: he has done all that has been in his power to extinguiſh that light, and draw men off from it: he knows that it is that light by which his kingdom of darkneſs is to be overthrown. He has had for many ages experience of its power to defeat his purpoſes, and baffle his deſigns; it is his conſtant plague; it is the main weapon which *Michael* uſes in his war with him; it is the ſword of the Spirit that pierces him and conquers him; it is that *great, and ſore and ſtrong ſword* with which God *puniſhes Leviathan, that crooked ſerpent*; it is that ſharp ſword that we read of, *Rev.* xix. 15. *that proceeds out of the mouth of him that ſat upon the horſe*, with which he ſmites his enemies. Every text is a dart to torment the old ſerpent: he has felt the ſtinging ſmart thouſands of times; therefore he is enraged againſt the bible, and hates every word in it; and therefore we may be ſure that he never will go about to raiſe perſons eſteem of it, or affection to it.

29. Fourthly,

29. Fourthly, Another rule to judge of ſpirits, may be drawn from thoſe oppoſite compellations given to the two oppoſite ſpirits, in the laſt words of the 6th verſe, *the ſpirit of truth*; *and ſpirit of error*. Theſe words exhibit the two oppoſite characters of the Spirit of God, and other ſpirits. And therefore, if we ſee that a ſpirit operates as a *ſpirit of truth*, leading perſons to *truth*, convincing them of thoſe things that are true, we may ſafely determine it is a right and true ſpirit. As for inſtance, if we obſerve that the ſpirit which is at work, makes men more ſenſible than they uſed to be, that there is a God and that he is a great God, and a juſt God: and makes them more to realize it, that they muſt die, that life is ſhort and very uncertain; that there is another world: that they have immortal ſouls, and that they muſt give account of themſelves to God; if it convinces them that they are exceeding ſinful by nature and practice; and that they are helpleſs in themſelves: and confirms them in other things that are agreeable to ſound doctrine: the ſpirit that works thus, operates as a ſpirit of truth: he repreſents things as they are indeed: he brings men to the light; and we may conclude, that it is not the ſpirit of darkneſs that doth thus *diſcover* and *make manifeſt* the truth.

30. Fifthly, If the ſpirit that is at work among a people *operates as a ſpirit of love to God and man*, it is a ſure ſign that it is the Spirit of God.

This

This ſign the apoſtle inſiſts upon from the 6th verſe to the end of the chapter: *Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love,* &c. Here it is evident, that the apoſtle is ſtill comparing thoſe two ſorts of perſons that are influenced by the oppoſite kinds of ſpirits; and mentions love as a mark by which we may know who has the true ſpirit, but this is eſpecially evident by the 12th and 13th verſes, *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us; hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit.* In theſe verſes love is ſpoken of as if it were that wherein the very nature of the Holy Spirit conſiſted: or as if divine love dwelling in us, and the Spirit of God dwelling in us, were the ſame thing; as it is alſo in the two laſt verſes of the foregoing chapter, and in the 16th verſe of this. Therefore this laſt mark he ſeems to ſpeak of as the moſt eminent; and ſo inſiſts much more largely upon it than upon all the reſt?

Therefore, when the ſpirit that is at work amongſt a people, works in them a delightful ſenſe of the excellency of Jeſus Chriſt; repreſenting him as the chief among ten thouſand, altogether lovely, and makes him precious to the ſoul; winning and drawing the heart with the wonderful, free love of God in giving his only begotten Son to die for us, and the wonderful dy-

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ing love of Chriſt to us who had no love to him, but were his enemies, as ver. 9, 10. *In this was manifeſted the love of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins.* And ver. 16. *And we have known, and believed the love that God hath to us.* And ver. 19. *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us:* when the Spirit excites to love on theſe motives, and makes the ſoul to long after God and Chriſt, and to live ſo as to pleaſe and honour them; and alſo quells contentions among men, and gives a ſpirit of peace and good-will, excites to acts of outward kindneſs, and earneſt deſires of the ſalvation of other ſouls; and cauſes a delight in thoſe that appear as the children of God, and followers of Chriſt: I ſay, when a ſpirit operates after this manner, there is the higheſt evidence of a true and divine Spirit.

31. Indeed there is a counterfeit of love, that often appears amongſt thoſe that are led by a ſpirit of deluſion. But there is ſufficient ſaid in this paſſage of truly Chriſtian love, to diſtinguiſh it from all ſuch counterfeits. It is love that ariſes from an apprehenſion of the wonderful riches of God's love to us in Chriſt Jeſus; attended with a ſenſe of our unworthineſs, and a renunciation of all our own excellency and righteouſneſs. See ver. 9, 10, 11, and 19. The ſureſt character

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of true divine love, is, that it is an humble love. 1 Cor. xiii. 4. *Charity vaunteth not itſelf, is not puffed up.* When therefore we ſee love in perſons attended with a ſenſe of their own littleneſs, vileneſs, weakneſs, and utter inſufficiency; and ſo with ſelf-renunciation, and poverty of ſpirit, there are the manifeſt tokens of the Spirit of God: he that thus dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him.

Love and humility are two things the moſt contrary to the ſpirit of the devil of any thing in the world; for the character of that evil ſpirit, above all things, conſiſts in pride and malice.

32. Thus I have ſpoken particularly to the ſeveral marks the apoſtle gives of a work of the true Spirit. There are ſome of theſe things the devil would not do if he could: thus, he would not awaken the conſcience, and make men ſenſible of their miſerable ſtate by nature, by reaſon of ſin, and of their great need of a Saviour. And he would not confirm men in a belief that Jeſus is the Son of God, and the Saviour of ſinners, or raiſe their value and eſteem of him; he would not beget in mens minds an opinion of the neceſſity, uſefulneſs and truth of the holy ſcriptures, or incline them to hearken to them, or make much uſe of them; nor would he go about to ſhew men the truth, in things that concern their ſouls; to undeceive them, and lead them out of darkneſs into light, and give them a view of things as they are indeed. And there are other

things,

things that the devil neither can nor will do: he will not give men a ſpirit of divine love or Chriſtian humility; nor could he if he would: theſe things are as contrary as poſſible to his nature. And therefore, when there is an extraordinary influence on the minds of a people, if theſe things are found in it, we are ſafe in determining that it is the work of God, whatever other circumſtances it may be attended with, whatever inſtruments are employed, whatever methods are taken to promote it, whatever means a ſovereign God, whoſe judgments are a great deep, makes uſe of to carry it on, and whatever motions there may be of the animal ſpirits, whatever effects may be wrought on mens bodies. Theſe marks, that the apoſtle has given, are ſufficient to ſtand alone, and ſupport themſelves; and wherever they are, they plainly ſhew the finger of God, and are ſufficient to outweigh a thouſand ſuch objections as many make from oddities, irregularities, and errors in conduct, and the deluſions and ſcandals of ſome that were believers.

33. But here ſome may object what the apoſtle *Paul* ſays, in the 2 *Cor.* xi. 13, 14. *Such are falſe apoſtles, deceitful workers, transforming themſelves into the apoſtles of Chriſt; and no marvel, for Satan himſelf is transformed into an angel of light.*

I anſwer, it is principally with a view to them, that the apoſtle gives theſe marks; as appears by the words of the text, *Believe not every ſpirit, but*

but try the ſpirits, whether they are of God. And this is the reaſon he gives, *Becauſe many falſe prophets are gone out into the world:* Thoſe *falſe prophets* the apoſtle *John* ſpeaks of, are doubtleſs the ſame ſort of men with thoſe *falſe prophets* and *deceitful workers* the apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks of, in whom *the devil was transformed into an angel of light*; and therefore we may be ſure theſe marks the apoſtle gives, are eſpecially adapted to diſtinguiſh between the true Spirit, and the devil transformed into an angel of light, becauſe they are given for that end. That is the apoſtle's declared purpoſe, to give marks by which the true Spirit may be diſtinguiſhed from that ſort of counterfeits.

34. Having thus done what I at firſt propoſed, in conſidering what are the certain, diſtinguiſhing marks by which we may ſafely proceed in judging of any work that falls under our obſervation, whether it be the work of the Spirit of God or no, I now proceed to the application.

I. From what has been ſaid, I will venture to draw this inference, viz. *That that extraordinary influence that has lately appeared on the minds of the people abroad in this land, cauſing in them an uncommon concern about the things of religion, is undoubtedly, in the general, from the Spirit of God.* There are but two things that need to be known in order to ſuch a work's being judged of, viz.

viz. *facts* and *rules*. The *rules* of the word of God we have laid before us; and as to *facts*, there are but two ways that we can come at them, so as to be in a capacity to compare them with the rules; either by our own observation, or by information from others that have had opportunity to observe.

As to this work that has lately been carried on in the land, there are so many things concerning it that are notorious, as, unless the apostle *John* was out in his rules, are sufficient to determine it to be in general the work of God. It is notorious that the Spirit that is at work, takes off persons minds from the vanities of the world, engages them in a deep concern about eternal happiness, puts them upon earnestly seeking their salvation, and convinces them of the dreadfulness of sin, and of their own guilty and miserable state by nature. It is notorious that it awakens men's consciences, and make them sensible of the dreadfulness of God's anger, and causes in them a great desire and earnest care and endeavour to obtain his favour. It is notorious that it puts them upon a more diligent improvement of the means of grace which God has appointed. It is also notorious that, in general, it works in persons a greater regard to the word of God, and desire of hearing and reading of it. And it is notoriously manifest that the Spirit in general operates as a Spirit of truth, making persons more sensible of what is really true, in those things

things that concern their eternal ſalvation; as that they muſt die, and that life is very ſhort and uncertain; that there is a great and juſt God, whom they are accountable to, and that they ſtand in great need of a Saviour. It is furthermore notorious, that this Spirit makes perſons more ſenſible of the value of that Jeſus that was crucified, and their need of him; and that it puts them upon earneſtly ſeeking an intereſt in him. It cannot be but theſe things ſhould be apparent to people in general through the land; for theſe things are not done in a corner. The work that has been wrought has not been confined to a few towns, in ſome remoter parts of the land, but has been carried on in many places, and in the principal and moſt populous and public places in it. And it has now been continued for a conſiderable time; ſo that there has been a great deal of opportunity to obſerve the manner of the work.

35. And here I would obſerve, that the nature and tendency of a ſpirit that is at work, may be determined with much greater certainty, when it is obſerved in a great multitude of people of all ſorts, and in various places, than when it is only ſeen in a few, in ſome particular place, that have been much converſant one with another. A few particular perſons may agree to put a cheat upon others. But when the work is ſpread over great part of a country, in places diſtant one from another, among people of all

ſorts

ſorts and all ages, and in perſons of ſound mind, good underſtanding, and known integrity; there would be the greateſt abſurdity in ſuppoſing that by all the obſervation that can be made for many months together, by thoſe that are moſt intimate with them in theſe affairs, and have long been acquainted with them, ſtill it cannot be determined what kind of influence the operation they are under has upon people's mind; whether it tends to awaken their conſciences, or to ſtupify them; to incline them more to ſeek their ſalvation, or neglect it; whether it confirms them in a belief of the ſcriptures, or leads them to deiſm; and ſo in other things. There is probably no particular perſon here preſent, that thinks himſelf to have a right to be treated as one of common ſenſe and veracity, but would think himſelf abuſed if he ſhould declare to others, that "he had altered his mind in theſe and thoſe particulars; he now found himſelf convinced of the truth of this or that, that formerly he did not believe;" if thoſe he made ſuch a profeſſion to would not believe him, though they had long been converſant with them, and though he perſiſted in this profeſſion for many months together, and nothing appeared in him but what agreed thereto. But much more unreaſonable would it be, when ſuch profeſſions are made, not by a particular perſon only, but by great numbers of people, to ſuppoſe that they all agree

in

in profeſſing what indeed they do not feel in their ſouls.

* 36. Thoſe in whom theſe uncommon appearances have been, whence have ariſen the main objections to this work, have been of two ſorts; either thoſe that have been in great diſtreſs in an apprehenſion of their ſin and miſery, or thoſe that have been overcome with a ſenſe of the greatneſs, wonderfulneſs, and excellency of divine things. Of the multitude of thoſe of the former ſort that I have had opportunity to obſerve, there have been very few; but by all that could be obſerved, their diſcipline has ariſen from real proper conviction. And though I do not ſuppoſe, when ſuch things were obſerved to be common, that perſons have laid themſelves under thoſe violent reſtraints, to avoid outward manifeſtations of their diſtreſs, that perhaps they otherwiſe would have done; yet there have been very few in whom there has been any appearance of feigning or affecting ſuch manifeſtations, and very many for whom it would have been undoubtedly impoſſible to avoid them. Generally thoſe that have been in theſe agonies have appeared to be in the perfect exerciſe of their reaſon; and thoſe of them that have been able to ſpeak, have been well able to give an account of the circumſtances of their minds, and the cauſe of their diſtreſs in the time of it, and well able to remember and give an account afterwards. I have known a very few inſtances of

thoſe that in their great extremity have for a ſhort ſpace been deprived, in ſome meaſure, of the uſe of reaſon; but among the many hundreds, and it may be thouſands, that have lately been brought to ſuch agonies, I never yet knew one laſtingly deprived of their reaſon. In ſome that I have known, melancholy has evidently been mixt; and when it is ſo, the difference is very appparent; their diſtreſſes are of another kind, and operate quite after another manner. It is not truth only that diſtreſſes them, but many vain ſhadows and notions. Some in their great diſtreſs have not been able to give an account of themſelves, or to explain the manner and cauſe of their trouble to others. But this will not at all be wondered at by thoſe who have had much to do with ſouls under ſpiritual difficulties. Some things that they are ſenſible of are altogether new to them, their ideas and inward ſenſations are new, and what they therefore know not how to accommodate language to, or to find words to expreſs. And ſome who at firſt ſay they know not what was the matter with them, on being particularly examined, have been able to repreſent the caſe, though of themſelves they could not find expreſſions ſo to do.

37. Some ſay, the terrors ſuch perſons are in, that have ſuch effects on their bodies, is only a *fright*. But certainly there ought to be a diſtinction made between a very great fear and extreme diſtreſs, ariſing from an apprehenſion of ſome

ſome dreadful *truth*, that is a cauſe fully proportionable to ſuch an effect, and a needleſs, cauſeleſs fright; which is of two kinds, either when perſons are terrified with that which is not the truth, (of this I have ſeen very few inſtances, unleſs in caſe of melancholy;) or ſecondly, when perſons are under a childiſh fright, only from ſome terrible outward appearance, and a general notion thence ariſing, that there is ſomething or other terrible, they know not what, without having in their minds the apprehenſion of any particular terrible truth whatſoever. Of ſuch a kind of fright I have ſeen very little appearance, either among old or young.

Thoſe that are in ſuch extremity, commonly expreſs a great ſenſe of their exceeding wickedneſs, of their great guilt in the ſight of God, and the dreadfulneſs of the puniſhment that ſin expoſes to. Very often they have a lively idea of the horrible pit of eternal miſery; and at the ſame time the wrath of God appears amazingly terrible to them: God appearing to them ſo much provoked, they are apprehenſive he will not bear with them any longer, but will now forthwith ſend them down to the dreadful pit they have in view. Very many, in the midſt of their extremity, have been brought to an extraordinary ſenſe of their fully deſerving that wrath and deſtruction which is then before their eyes; and at the ſame time that they feared every moment it would be executed upon them, they have

been greatly convinced it would be altogether juſt that it ſhould. And very often ſome text of ſcripture to that effect has been ſent home upon their minds, whereby their minds have been calmed, and they have been brought as it were to lie at God's foot. And after great agonies, a little before light has ariſen, they have been compoſed and quiet in a kind of ſubmiſſion to a juſt God, but their bodily ſtrength much ſpent; and ſometimes their lives, to appearance, almoſt gone. Then light has appeared, and a glorious Redeemer, with his wonderful all-ſufficient grace, has been repreſented to them often in ſome ſweet invitation of ſcripture. Sometimes the light comes in ſuddenly, ſometimes more gradually, filling their ſouls with love, admiration, joy, and ſelf-abaſement; drawing forth their hearts in longing after the Redeemer, and longing to lie in the duſt before him; and longings that others might behold and embrace him; and longings to live to his glory; but appearing vile in their own eyes, and having much jealouſy over their own hearts. And all the appearance of a real change of heart have followed; and grace has acted from time to time, after the ſame manner it uſed to act in thoſe that were converted formerly, except that in many light and comfort have been in a higher degree. Many very young children have been thus wrought upon. There have been ſome inſtances very much like thoſe demoniacs, *Mark* i. 26. and

chap.

chap. ix. 26. of whom we read, that *when the devil had cried with a loud voice, and rent them sore, he came out of them.* And probably those instances were designed for a type of such things as these. Some have several turns of great agonies before they are delivered; and some have been in such distresses, and it has passed off, and no deliverance at all has followed.

38. Some object against it as great confusion, when there is a number together, in such circumstances: and say, God cannot be the author of it, because he is the God of order, not of confusion. But let it be considered, what is the proper notion of confusion, but the breaking that order of things, whereby they are duly directed to their end, so that the order and the due connection of means being broken, they fail of their end; but conviction and conversion of sinners is the end of religious means. Not but I think persons should endeavour to refrain from such outward manifestations, in the time of the solemn worship. But if God is pleased to convince the consciences of persons, so that they cannot avoid great outward manifestations, even to the interrupting, and breaking off those public means they were attending, I do not think this is confusion, or an unhappy interruption, any more than if a company should meet on the field to pray for rain, and should be broken off from their exercise by a plentiful shower. Would to God that all the public assemblies in the land

were broken off from their public exercises with such confusion as this the next sabbath day! We need not be sorry for the breaking the order of the means, by obtaining the end to which that order is directed: he that is going a journey to fetch a treasure, need not be sorry that he is stopped, by meeting the treasure in the midst of his journey.

Besides those that are overcome with conviction and distress, I have seen many that have had their bodily strength taken away with a sense of the glorious excellency of the Redeemer, and the wonders of his dying love: with a very uncommon sense of their own littleness, and exceeding vileness attending it, with all expressions of the greatest abasement and abhorrence of themselves; and many have been even overcome with pity to the souls of others, and longing for their salvation.

39. As to the imprudencies and irregularities that have been, it is not at all to be wondered at, that a reformation, after a long-continued and almost universal deadness, should at first be attended with such things. When God at first began his great work for the deliverance of his people, after their long-continued bondage in *Egypt*, there were false wonders mixed with true for a while; which hardened the unbelieving Egyptians, and made them to doubt of the divinity of the whole work. When day-light first appears after a night of darkness, we must expect

expect to have darkneſs mixt with light, for a while, and not have perfect day, and the ſun riſen at once. The fruits of the earth are green before they are ripe, and come to their perfection gradually; and ſo Chriſt tells us, *is the kingdom of God*, Mark iv. 26, 27, 28. *So is the kingdom of God; as if a man ſhould caſt ſeed into the ground, and ſhould ſleep, and riſe night and day; and the ſeed ſhould ſpring and grow up, he knoweth not how: for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herſelf; firſt the blade; then the ear; then the full corn in the ear.*

The imprudences and errors that have attended this work, are the leſs to be wondered at, if it be conſidered, that it is chiefly young perſons that have been the ſubjects of it. And doubtleſs it has been one occaſion of much of the miſconduct there has been, that in many places, people who are the ſubjects of this work of God's Spirit, ſee plainly that their miniſters have an ill opinion of the work: and therefore with juſt reaſon, dare not apply themſelves to them as their guides in this work: and ſo are without guides: and no wonder that when a people are as ſheep without a ſhepherd, they wander out of the way. A people in ſuch circumſtances eſpecially ſtand in great and continual need of guides, and their guides ſtand in continual need of much more wiſdom than they have of their own. And if a people have miniſters that favour the work, and rejoice in it, yet it is not to be expected

that either people or miniſters ſhould know ſo well how to conduct themſelves in ſuch an extraordinary ſtate of things, while it is new, and what they never had any experience of before, as they may, after they have had experience, and time to ſee the tendency, conſequences and iſſue of things.

40. II. Let us all be hence warned, *by no means to oppoſe, or do any thing, in the leaſt to hinder that work that has lately been carried on in the land.*

The example of the *Jews* in Chriſt's and the apoſtles times, is enough to beget in thoſe that do not acknowledge this work, a great jealouſy of themſelves, and to make them exceeding cautious of what they ſay or do. Chriſt then *was in the world, and the world knew him not; he came to his own*, by profeſſion, *and his own received him not.* That coming of Chriſt had been much ſpoken of in ſcripture, and had been long expected; and yet becauſe Chriſt came in a manner that they did not expect, they would not own him, but oppoſed him, counted him a madman, and the Spirit that he wrought by the ſpirit of the devil. They ſtood and wondered at the great things that were done; but yet they met with ſo many ſtumbling-blocks, that they finally could not acknowledge him. And when the Spirit of God came to be ſo wonderfully poured out in the apoſtles days, they looked upon it to be confuſion and diſtraction. They were aſtoniſhed by what

what they saw and heard, but not convinced. And the work of God was then rejected by those especially that were most conceited of their own understanding and knowledge, agreeable to *Isa.* xxix. 14. *Therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* And many of them that had been in reputation for religion and piety, had a great spite against the work, because they saw it tended to diminish their honour, and to reproach their formality and lukewarmness. Yea, some maliciously and openly opposed and reproached the work of the Spirit of God, and called it the work of the devil.

There is another coming of Christ, a spiritual coming, to set up his kingdom in the world, that is as much spoken of in scripture prophecy, as that first coming of Christ was, that has been long expected by the church of God; and we have reason to think will be, in many respects, parallel with the other. And certainly, that low state that the visible church of God has lately been sunk into, is very parallel with the state of the *Jewish* church, when Christ came; and therefore no wonder at all, that when Christ comes, his work should appear a strange work to most. Whether the work that is now wrought, be the beginning of that great coming of Christ to set up his kingdom, that is much spoken of, or

no; it is evident, it is a work of the ſame Spirit, and of the ſame nature. And there is no reaſon to doubt, but that for perſons to continue long to refuſe to acknowledge Chriſt in the work, eſpecially thoſe that are ſet to be teachers in his church, will be in like manner provoking to God, as it was in the *Jews* of old, to refuſe to acknowledge Chriſt; and that, notwithſtanding they may plead the great ſtumbling-blocks that are in the way, and the cauſe they have to doubt of the work.

41. Thoſe that cannot believe the work to be true, becauſe of the extraordinary degree and manner of it, ſhould conſider how it was with the unbelieving Lord in *Samaria*, who ſaid, *Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?* To whom *Eliſha* ſaid, *behold thou ſhall ſee it with thine eyes, but ſhalt not eat thereof.* Let all to whom this work is a cloud and darkneſs, as the pillar of cloud and fire was to the *Egyptians*, take heed that it be not their deſtruction, as that was theirs, while it gave light to God's *Iſrael*.

* I would pray thoſe that quiet themſelves with that, that they proceed on a principle of prudence, and are waiting to ſee what the iſſue of things will be, and what fruits men will bring forth in their lives and converſations, would conſider whether this will juſtify a long refraining from acknowledging Chriſt when he appears ſo wonderfully in the land. It is probable that many

ny of thoſe that are thus waiting, know not what they are waiting for: if they wait to ſee a work of God without difficulties and ſtumbling-blocks, that will be like the fool waiting at the river-ſide to have the water all run by. A work of God without ſtumbling-blocks is never to be expected: *it muſt needs be that offences come.* There never yet was any great manifeſtation that God made of himſelf to the world, without many difficulties attending it. It is with the works of God, as it is with the word of God; they are full of thoſe things that ſeem ſtrange and inconſiſtent and difficult to the unbelieving hearts of men. *Chriſt* and his work always was, and always will be a ſtone of ſtumbling, and rock of offence; a gin and a ſnare to many. The prophet *Hoſea*, in the laſt chapter of his prophecy, ſpeaking of a glorious revival of religion in God's church, when God would *be as the dew unto Iſrael, and he ſhould grow as the lilly, and caſt forth his roots as Lebanon*, concludes all thus, *Who is wiſe? And he ſhall underſtand theſe things; prudent? And he ſhall know them. For the ways of the Lord are right, and the juſt ſhall walk in them; but the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.*

* It is probable that the ſtumbling blocks that now attend this work, will in ſome reſpects be increaſed, and not diminiſhed. Particularly, we probably ſhall ſee more inſtances of apoſtacy and groſs iniquity among profeſſors. And if one kind of ſtumbling-blocks are removed, it it to be ex-

pected that others will come. It is with Chriſt's works, as it was with his parables; things that are difficult to mens dark minds, are ordered of purpoſe, for the trial of perſons diſpoſitions and ſpiritual ſenſe. Thoſe that are now waiting to ſee the iſſue of this work, think they ſhall be better able to determine by and by; but they are probably many of them miſtaken. The *Jews*, that ſaw Chriſt's miracles, waited to ſee better evidences of his being the Meſſiah; they wanted a ſign from heaven; but they waited in vain; their ſtumbling-blocks did not diminiſh, but increaſe; they found no end to them; and ſo were more and more hardened in their unbelief.

42. It is ſtrange, that thoſe who have doubted of the work that has been attended with ſuch uncommon external appearances, ſhould be eaſy in their doubts, without taking thorough pains to inform themſelves, by going where ſuch things have been to be ſeen, and narrowly obſerving them, and diligently enquiring into them; not contenting themſelves only with obſerving two or three inſtances, nor reſting till they were fully informed by their own obſervation. I do not doubt, but that if this courſe had been taken, it would have convinced all whoſe minds are not ſhut up againſt conviction. How greatly have they erred, who only from the uncertain reports of others, have ventured to ſpeak ſlightingly of theſe things? That caution of an unbelieving *Jew* might teach them more prudence, *Acts* v. 38,

38, 39. *Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it: lest haply ye be found to fight against God.*

I come now in the

* 43. III. and last place, to apply myself to those that are the friends of this work, who have been partakers of it, or are zealous to promote it. Let me earnestly exhort such, *to give diligent heed to themselves, to avoid all errors and misconduct, and whatsoever may darken and obscure the work, and give occasion to those that stand ready to reproach it.* The apostle was careful *to cut off occasion from those that desired occasion.* The same apostle exhorts *Titus* to maintain that strict care and watch over himself, that both his preaching and behaviour might be such as *could not be condemned; that he who was of the contrary part might be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of them.* Tit. ii. 7, 8. We had need to be *wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.* It is of no small consequence that we should behave ourselves innocently and prudently. We must expect that the great enemy of this work will try his utmost *with us*; and he will especially triumph if he can prevail against any of us, in any thing to blind and mislead us: he knows it will do more to further his interest, than if he prevailed against an hundred others. We had need to watch and pray, for we are but little children; this roaring lion

lion is too ſtrong for us, and this old ſerpent too ſubtle for us.

Humility, ſelf-diffidence, and an entire dependence on our Lord, will be our beſt defence. Let us therefore maintain the ſtricteſt watch againſt ſpiritual pride, or being lifted up with extraordinary experiences and comforts. We had need, after ſuch favours, in a ſpecial manner to keep a ſtrict and jealous eye upon our own hearts, leſt there ſhould ariſe high thoughts of ourſelves, as being now peculiar favourites of heaven. When we have great diſcoveries of God made to our ſouls, we ſhould not ſhine bright in our own eyes. *Moſes*, when he had been converſing with God in the mount, though his face ſhone ſo as to dazzle the eyes of *Aaron* and the people, yet he did not ſhine in his own eyes; *he wiſt not that his face ſhone*. Let none think themſelves out of danger of this ſpiritual pride. God ſaw that the apoſtle *Paul* himſelf was not out of danger of it, no not when he had juſt been converſing with God in the third heaven: ſee 2 *Cor.* xii. 7. pride is the firſt ſin that ever entered into the univerſe, and it lies loweſt of all in the foundation of the whole building of ſin, and is the moſt ſecret, deceitful, and unſearchable in its way of working, of any luſt whatſoever. It is ready to mix with every thing; and nothing is ſo hateful to God, and contrary to the ſpirit of the goſpel; and there is no one ſin that does ſo much let in the devil into the hearts of men, and expoſe them to his deluſions. I have ſeen it in many

many inſtances. The devil has come in at this door, preſently after ſome extraordinary communication with God, and has woefully deluded and led them aſtray, till God has mercifully opened their eyes: and they themſelves have afterwards been ſenſible that it was pride that betrayed them.

44. Some of the true friends of the work of God's Spirit have erred in giving too much heed to impulſes and ſtrong impreſſions of their minds. Theſe impreſſions, if they are truly from the Spirit of God, are of a quite different nature from the *gracious influences* of the Spirit of God on the heart. They are of the nature of the *extraordinary gifts* of the Spirit.

But his ordinary gracious influences are by far the moſt excellent and glorious, as the apoſtle largely ſhews in the firſt of *Corinthians*, beginning with the 21ſt verſe of the 12th chapter, where ſpeaking of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, he ſays, *But covet earneſtly the beſt gifts*; *and yet I ſhew you a more excellent way*, i. e. a more excellent way of the influence of the Spirit: and then he goes on in the next chapter, to ſhew what that more excellent way is, even that which ſummarily conſiſts in *charity*, or divine *love*. A man may have thoſe extraordinary gifts, and yet be abominable to God and go to hell: the ſpiritual and eternal life of the ſoul do not conſiſt

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in the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, but the grace of the Spirit: this, and not those, is that influence of the Spirit of God which God bestows on his dear children: he has sometimes thrown out the other to dogs and swine, as he did to *Balaam*, *Saul*, and *Judas*. Many wicked men at the day of judgment will plead, *have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?* * The greatest privilege of the prophets and apostles was not their working miracles, but their eminent holiness. The grace that was in their hearts was a thousand times more their dignity and honour than their miraculous gifts. To have grace in the heart is an higher privilege than the blessed virgin herself had, in having the body of the second person in the Trinity conceived in her womb, by the power of the Highest overshadowing her, *Luke* xi. 27, 28. *And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that thou hast sucked! But he said, yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of* God, *and keep it.*

45. The ordinary sanctifying influences of the Spirit of God are the end of all extraordinary gifts, as the apostle shews, *Eph.* iv. 11, 12, 13. They are good for nothing any further than

as

as they are subordinate to this end; they will be so far from profiting any without it, that they will only aggravate their misery. This is, as the apostle observes, the most excellent way of God's communicating his Spirit to his church; it is the great glory of the church in all ages. This glory is what makes the state of the church on earth most like the state of the church in heaven, where prophecies and tongues, and other miraculous gifts cease, and are vanished away, and God communicates his Spirit only in that more excellent way that the apostle speaks of, viz. *Charity*, or divine *Love*, which never faileth.

* I would therefore intreat the people of God to be very cautious how they give heed to such things. I have seen them fail in many instances, and know by experience that impressions being made with great power, and presently after, yea, in the midst of sweet communion with God, and attended with texts of scripture strongly impressed on the mind, are no sure signs of their being revelations from heaven; for I have known such impressions fail, and prove vain by the event, in some instances attended with all these circumstances.

* 46. Neither let us despise human learning. They that say human learning is of little or no use in the work of the ministry, do not consider what they say. By human learning I mean, the

improvement

improvement of the common knowledge which men have by human and outward means. And therefore to ſay that human learning is of no uſe, is as much as to ſay that the education of a child, or that the common knowledge that a grown man has more than a little child, is of no uſe; ſo that a child of four years old is as fit for a teacher in the church of God, with the ſame degree of grace, and capable of doing as much to advance the kingdom of Chriſt by his inſtruction, as any underſtanding man of thirty years of age. If adult perſons have greater ability and advantage to do ſervice, becauſe they have more human knowledge than a little child, then doubtleſs if they have more human knowledge ſtill, with the ſame degree of grace, they would have ſtill greater ability and advantage to do ſervice. An increaſe of knowledge, without doubt, increaſes a man's advantage either to do good or hurt, according as he is diſpoſed. It is too manifeſt to be denied, that God made great uſe of human learning in the apoſtle *Paul*, as he alſo did in *Moſes* and *Solomon*.

And if knowledge, obtained by human means, is not to be deſpiſed, then it will follow that the means of obtaining it is not to be neglected, viz. Study; and that this is of great uſe in order to a preparation for a public inſtructing others. And though undoubtedly, an having the heart full of the powerful influences of the Spirit of God, may

may at ſometimes enable perſons to ſpeak profitably, yea, very excellently, without ſtudy; yet this will not warrant us needleſly to caſt ourſelves down from the pinnacle of the temple, depending upon it that the Lord will bear us up, when there is another way to go down, though it be not ſo quick. And I would pray that *method*, which tends greatly to help both the underſtanding and memory, may not be wholly neglected.

*47. One other thing that I would intreat the friends of this work of God to avoid, is managing the controverſy with oppoſers with too much heat, and an angry zeal; and particularly inſiſting very much on the perſecution of oppoſers. If this perſecution were ten times as great as it is, methinks it would not be beſt to ſay ſo much about it. It becomes Chriſtians to be like lambs, not to be apt to complain and cry when they are hurt; to be dumb and not to open their mouth, after the example of our dear Redeemer; and not to be like ſwine, that are apt to ſcream aloud when they are touched. We ſhould not be ready preſently to think and ſpeak of fire from heaven, when the *Samaritans* oppoſe us, and will not receive us into their villages! God's zealous miniſters would do well to think of the direction the apoſtle *Paul* gave to a zealous miniſter, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, 26. *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient*;

tient; in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe themſelves, if God, *peradventure, will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth. And that they may recover themſelves out of the ſnare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

THOUGHTS

Concerning the prefent Revival of

RELIGION in *New-England*.

Extracted from Mr. EDWARDS.

PART I.

Shewing that the work that has of late been going on in this land, is a glorious work of God.

THE error of thofe who have had ill thoughts of the great religious operation on the minds of men, that has been of late in *New-England*, feems fundamentally to lie in three things; *firſt*, In judging of this work *a priori*. *Secondly*, In not taking the holy fcriptures as a whole rule whereby to judge of fuch operations. *Thirdly*, In not juſtly diſtinguiſhing the good from the bad.

1. They

1. They have greatly erred in the way which they have gone about to try this work, whether it be a work of the Spirit of God or no, viz. In judging of it *a priori*; from the way that it began, the inſtruments that have been employed, and the methods that have been taken in carrying it on. Whereas, if we duly conſider, ſuch a work is not to be judged of *a priori*, but *a poſteriori*: we are to obſerve the effect wrought, and if upon examination it be found agreeable to the word of God, we are bound, without more ado, to reſt in it as God's work; and ſhall be rebuked for our arrogance, if we refuſe ſo to do till God ſhall explain to us how he has brought this effect to paſs, or why he has made uſe of ſuch and ſuch means in doing it. Thoſe texts are enough to cauſe us with trembling to forbear ſuch a way of judging of a work of God's Spirit, † *Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counſellor hath taught him? With whom took he counſel, and who inſtructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and ſhewed to him the way of underſtanding?* ‡ *The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou hearеſt the ſound thereof; but canſt not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth.* We hear the ſound, we perceive the effect, and from thence we judge that the wind does indeed blow, without waiting, firſt to be ſatisfied what ſhould be the cauſe of its blowing from ſuch a part of the heavens, and how

† Iſaiah xl. 13, 14. ‡ John iii. 8.

how it comes to pafs that it fhould blow in fuch a manner, at fuch a time. To judge *a priori*, is a wrong way of judging of any of the works of God. We are not to refolve that we will firft be fatisfied how God brought this or the other effect to pafs, and why he made it thus, or why it has pleafed him to ufe fuch and fuch means, before we will acknowledge his work. This is too much for the *clay* to take upon it with refpect to the *potter*. God *gives no account of his matters: his judgments are a great deep: he hath his way in the fea, and his path in the great waters, and his footfteps are not known. And who fhall teach* God *knowledge, or enjoy him his way, or fay unto him, What doft thou? We know not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even fo we know not the works of* God *who maketh all.* No wonder therefore if thofe that go this forbidden way, in judging of the prefent work, are perplexed and confounded.

* Indeed God has not taken that courfe, nor made ufe of thofe means to begin and carry on this great work, which men in their wifdom would have thought moft advifeable, if he had afked their counfel. But the great God has wrought like himfelf; fo as to fhew his own glory, and caft contempt on all that ftrength, wifdom, prudence, and fufficiency that men have been wont to glory in; in fulfilment of

that

that, † *The loftineſs of man ſhall be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be made low, and the Lord alone ſhall be exalted in that day.* God doth thus, intermingling ſo many ſtumbling-blocks with his work; in ſuffering ſo much of human weakneſs to appear, and in ordering ſo many things that are myſterious to mens wiſdom: in pouring out his Spirit chiefly on the common people, and admitting them nearer to himſelf than the great, the honourable, the rich, and the learned, agreeable to that prophecy, ‡ *The Lord alſo ſhall ſave the tents of Judah firſt, that the glory of the houſe of David, and the glory of the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, do not magnify themſelves againſt Judah.* Thoſe that dwelt in the tents of *Judah* were the people that dwelt in the country, and were of inferior rank; the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* were the citizens, the men of wealth and figure; and *Jeruſalem* alſo was the habitation or reſort of the prieſts and Levites, and the officers and judges. The houſe of *David* were the higheſt rank of all the royal family, and the great men that were round the king.—It is evident by the context, that this propheſy has reſpect to ſomething further than the ſaving the people out of the *Babyloniſh* captivity.

* God in this work has begun at the lower end, and has made uſe of *the weak and fooliſh things of the world* to carry it on. Of the miniſters that have been chiefly employed, ſome have

† Iſaiah ii. 17. ‡ Zech. xii. 7.

have been mere babes in age and ſtanding, and ſome of them ſuch as have not been ſo high in reputation among their fellows as many others. And God has ſuffered their infirmities to appear in the ſight of others, ſo as much to diſpleaſe them; and at the ſame time it has pleaſed God greatly to ſucceed them, while he has not ſo ſucceeded others that are reputed vaſtly their ſuperiors. Yea, there is reaſon to think that it has pleaſed God to make uſe of the infirmities of ſome that he has ſucceeded; as particularly their imprudent and raſh zeal, to chaſtiſe the deadneſs, negligence, earthly-mindedneſs and vanity that have been found among miniſters in the late times, wherein miniſters and people have ſunk into ſuch a deep ſleep. Theſe things in miniſters of the goſpel, that go forth as the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, and have the care of immortal ſouls, are extremely abominable to God; vaſtly more hateful in his ſight than all the imprudence and intemperate heats, wildneſs and diſtraction (as ſome call it) of theſe zealous preachers. A ſupine careleſſneſs, or worldly ſpirit in a miniſter of the goſpel, is the worſt diſtraction in the ſight of God. God may alſo make uſe of the cenſorioufneſs of ſome preachers, the more to humble and purify ſome of his own children that have been wrongfully cenſured, and to fit them for more eminent ſervice.

II. Another fundamental error of thoſe that

do not acknowledge the divinity of this work is, not taking the holy ſcriptures as a *whole*, and ſufficient rule to judge of ſuch things by. They that have one conſiſtent rule to judge by, may come to ſome clear determination, but they that have half a dozen different rules to make the thing they would judge of agree to, inſtead of juſtly and clearly determining, do but perplex and darken themſelves and others.

They will indeed make ſome uſe of the ſcripture, ſo far as they think it ſerves their turn; but do not make uſe of it *alone*, as a rule ſufficient by itſelf. They make as much or more uſe of other things, to judge of this work by. As particularly,

1. Some make *philoſophy*, inſtead of the holy ſcriptures, their rule of judging of this work; particularly the philoſophical notions they entertain of the nature of the ſoul, its faculties and affections. "There is but little ſober, ſolid religion, ſay they, in this work; it is little elſe but flaſh and noiſe. Religion now-a-days all runs out into tranſports and high flights of the paſſions and affections." In their philoſophy, the affections of the ſoul are but the meaneſt principles that it has; that belong to man as partaking of animal nature, and what he has in common with the brute creation, rather than any thing whereby he is conformed to angels and pure ſpirits.

But theſe gentlemen labour under great miſ-

takes,

takes, both in their philoſophy and divinity. It is true, diſtinction muſt be made in the affections or paſſions. Some are much more ſolid than others. There are many exerciſes of the affections that are little to be depended on; and often there is a great deal that appertains to them, which is very much owing to the frame of the body; and that which more eſpecially obtains the name of paſſion, is nothing ſolid or ſubſtantial. But it is falſe philoſophy to ſuppoſe this is the caſe with all great and high affections; and falſe divinity to ſuppoſe that religious affections do not appertain to the eſſence of Chriſtianity. On the contrary, the very life and ſoul of all true religion conſiſts in them.

* All will allow that true holineſs has its ſeat chiefly in the heart; not the head. It follows, that it conſiſts chiefly in holy *affections*. For the things of religion take place in men's hearts, no further than they are *affected* with them. The informing of the underſtanding is all vain, any further than it *affects* the heart, or, which is the the ſame thing, has influence on the *affections*.

Thoſe gentlemen will doubtleſs allow that true religion, as it has its ſeat in the heart, is capable of very high degrees in the ſoul. As for inſtance, they will doubtleſs allow that the holineſs of the heart is capable of being raiſed to an hundred times as great a degree of ſtrength, as it is in the moſt eminent ſaint on earth; and yet be

true holineſs ſtill. Now I aſk, by what name they will call theſe high exerciſes of the heart? Are they not high affections? What can they conſiſt in? But in high acts of love; ſtrong and vigorous exerciſes of benevolence and complacence; ſtrong deſires after God, yea, thoſe very ſame high and raiſed affections that before they made light of?

I ſuppoſe further, that all allow there is nothing but ſolid religion in heaven; but that there, religion is raiſed to an exceeding great height, to ſtrong, exalted exerciſes of heart. Now, what other ſtrong and high exerciſes of the heart, can we deviſe for them, but holy affections, high degrees of love to God, rejoicing in God, admiring of God?—Therefore theſe things, in the angels in heaven, are not to be deſpiſed by the name of great heats and tranſports of the paſſions.

And it will be farther allowed, that the more eminent the ſaints are on earth, the more they are like the ſaints in heaven, *i. e.* (by what has been juſt now obſerved) the more they have of high or raiſed affections.

If we take the ſcriptures for our whole rule, then the greater and higher are the exerciſes of love to God, longings after God, delight in the children of God, love to mankind, brokenneſs of heart, abhorrence of ſin, and ſelf-abhorrence for ſin; exalting and glorying in God; ſo much the higher is Chriſt's religion raiſed in the ſoul.

But

But it is a ſtumbling to ſome, that religious affections ſhould be ſo *violent* (as they expreſs it) in ſome perſons: they are therefore ready to doubt whether it can be the Spirit of God, or whether this vehemence be not rather a ſign of an evil ſpirit. But what is repreſented in ſcripture as more powerful in its effects than the Spirit of God? Which is therefore called † *The power of the Higheſt.* And it is ſaid to operate in the minds of men with the *exceeding greatneſs of divine power*, and ‡ *according to the working of God's mighty power.* So in 2 *Tim.* i. 7. the Spirit of God is called *the Spirit of power, and love, and of a ſound mind.* And the Spirit is repreſented by a mighty wind, and by fire, things moſt powerful in their operation.

2. Many are guilty of not taking the holy ſcriptures as a ſufficient and whole rule, whereby to judge of this work, whether it be the work of God; in that they judge by thoſe things which the ſcripture does not give as any marks whereby to judge one way or the other, *viz.* The effects that religious affections of mind have upon the body. Scripture rules reſpect the ſtate of the mind, and perſons voluntary behaviour; not the phyſical ſtate of the body. The deſign of the ſcripture is to teach us divinity, and not phyſic and anatomy. Miniſters are made the watchmen of men's ſouls, and not their bodies; and therefore the great rule which God has commit-

† Luke i. 35. ‡ Eph. i. 19.

ted into their hands is to make them divines, not phyſicians. Chriſt knew what inſtructions and rules his church would ſtand in need of, better than we do; and if he had ſeen it needful in order to the church's ſafety, he doubtleſs would have given miniſters rules to judge of bodily effects; and would have told them how the pulſe ſhould beat under ſuch and ſuch exerciſes of the mind: when men ſhould look pale, and when they ſhould ſhed tears; when they ſhould tremble, and whether or no they ſhould ever be faint or cry out; or whether the body ſhould ever be put into convulſions: he would have put ſome book into their hands, to make them anatomiſts and phyſicians; but he has not done it, becauſe he did not ſee it to be needful. He judged, that if miniſters did their duty as overſeers of the ſtate of mens ſouls, and of their voluntary conduct, according to the rules he had given, his church would be well provided for. And therefore thoſe miniſters that buſy themſelves about the involuntary motions of the fluids and ſolids of mens bodies, when nothing appears but that the ſtate of their minds and their behaviour is good and agreeable to God's word; I ſay, ſuch miniſters go out of the place that Chriſt has ſet them in, and leave their proper buſineſs, as much as if they ſhould undertake to tell who are under the influence of the Spirit by their looks, or their gait.

The

The moſt ſpecious thing that is alledged againſt theſe, is, that the body is impaired, and health injured; and that 'tis hard to think that God, in the merciful influences of his Spirit on men, would wound their bodies, and impair their health. But if it were ſo commonly (which I don't ſuppoſe it is) that perſons received a laſting wound to their health by extraordinary impreſſions made upon their minds, yet 'tis too much for us to determine that God ſhall never bring an outward calamity in beſtowing a vaſtly greater ſpiritual good. *Jacob* in wreſtling with God, at the ſame time that he received the bleſſing from God, ſuffered a great outward calamity from his hand; God impaired his body, ſo that he never got over it as long as he lived: he gave him the bleſſing, but ſent him away *halting on his thigh*, and he went lame all his life after. And yet this is not mentioned as if it were any diminution of the great mercy of God to him, when God bleſſed him and he received his name *Iſrael*, becauſe *as a Prince he had power with God, and had prevailed.*

But ſay ſome, the operations of the Spirit of God are of a benign nature. True; yet it has been a thing allowed, till now, that there is ſuch a thing as being *ſick of love* to Chriſt, or having the bodily ſtrength weakened by ſtrong and vigorous exerciſes of love to him. And however kind to human nature the influences of the Spirit of God are, yet no body doubts but that divine

and eternal things, as they may be discovered, would overpower the nature of man in its present state; and that therefore the body, in its present weakness, is not fitted for the views and pleasures of heaven: yea, that if God did discover but a little of that which is seen by the angels in heaven, our frail natures would sink under it—Let us rationally consider what we profess to believe of the infinite greatness of the things of God, the divine wrath, the divine glory, the infinite love and grace in Jesus Christ, and the vastness and infinite importance of the things of eternity. How reasonable then is it to suppose, that if it please God to withdraw the veil, and give a view of the great things of another world in their transcendent and infinite greatness, human nature, that is as the grass, a shaking leaf, a weak withering flower, should totter under such a discovery? Such a bubble is too weak to bear the weight of a view of things that are so vast. Alas! what is dust and ashes, that it should support itself under the view of the awful wrath or infinite glory of JEHOVAH! No wonder therefore that it is said, *no man can see me and live.* That external glory and majesty of Christ which *Daniel* saw, when † *there remained no strength in him, and his comeliness was turned in him into corruption*, and which the apostle *John* saw, when he *fell at his feet as dead:* was but a shadow of that spiritual glory and majesty

† Dan. x. 6, 7, 8.

majeſty of Chriſt, which will be manifeſted in another world, and which is ſometimes, in ſome degree, manifeſted to the ſoul in this world, by the influences of the Spirit of God. And, if the beholding the ſhadow of this majeſty and glory did ſo overpower human nature, is it unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that a ſight of the glory itſelf, ſhould have as powerful an effect? The prophet *Habakkuk*, ſpeaking of the awful manifeſtations God made of his majeſty and wrath, at the *red ſea*, and in the wilderneſs, and at mount *Sinai*, where he gave the law; and of the impreſſion God cauſed it to have upon him, to the end that he might be ſaved from that wrath, and *reſt in the day of trouble*; ſays, † *when I heard, my belly trembled, my lips quivered at the voice, rottenneſs entered into my bones, I trembled myſelf, that I might reſt in the day of trouble.* Which is much ſuch an effect as the diſcovery of the ſame majeſty and wrath has had on many in theſe days: and to the ſame purpoſes, *viz.* to give them *reſt in the day of trouble*, and ſave them from that wrath. The pſalmiſt alſo ſpeaks of ſuch an affect as I have often ſeen on perſons under religious affections, ‡ *I opened my mouth and panted, for I longed for thy commandments.*

God is pleaſed ſometimes, in dealing ſpiritual bleſſings to his people, to exceed the capacity of the veſſel in its preſent ſcantineſs; ſo that he

† Hab. iii. 16. ‡ Pſal. cxix. 131.

does not only fill it full, but he makes their *cup to run over*; and pours out a bleſſing in ſuch a manner and meaſure that there is not room to receive it. He gives them riches more than they can carry away, as he did to *Jehoſhaphat* and his people in a time of great ſavour, in anſwer to earneſt prayer, when the people bleſſed the Lord in the valley of *Berchah*. † It has been with the diſciples of Chriſt, for a long time, a time of great emptineſs upon ſpiritual accounts; they have gone hungry, and have been toiling in vain, during a dark ſeaſon: a time of night with the church of God; as it was with the diſciples of old, when they had *toiled all night and caught nothing*. But now, the morning being come, Jeſus appears to his diſciples, and takes a compaſſionate notice of their wants, and ſays to them, *Children, have ye any meat?* and gives ſome of them abundance, that they are not able to draw their net; yea, ſo that their net breaks, and their veſſel is over-loaded and begins to ſink.

We cannot determine that God never ſhall give perſons ſuch a diſcovery of himſelf, as even to take away their lives. It is ſuppoſed by many divines, that *Moſes'* life was taken away after this manner; and this has alſo been ſuppoſed of ſome other ſaints. Yea, I ſee no other ſure grounds to determine, that God ſhall never make ſuch ſtrong impreſſions on the mind by his Spirit, as ſhall

† 2 Chron. xx. 25, 26.

ſhall be an occaſion of ſo impairing the frame of the body, and particularly that part of the body, the brain, that perſons ſhall be deprived of the uſe of reaſon. As it is too much for us to ſay, that God will not bring an outward calamity in beſtowing ſpiritual bleſſings; ſo it is too much for us to determine how great an outward calamity he will bring. If God gives great diſcoveries of himſelf, and love to him, the benefit is infinitely greater than the calamity, though the life ſhould preſently be taken away; yea, though the ſoul ſhould not immediately be taken, but lie ſome years in a deep ſleep, and then be taken to heaven: or, which is much the ſame thing, though it be deprived of the uſe of its faculties, and be unactive and unſerviceable, as if it lay in a deep ſleep for ſome years, and then ſhould paſs into glory. We cannot determine how great a calamity diſtraction is, when conſidered with all its conſequences, and all that might have been conſequent if the diſtraction had not happened: nor indeed whether (thus conſidered) it be any calamity at all, or whether it be not a mercy, by preventing ſome great ſin, or ſome more dreadful thing, if it had not been. It is a great fault in us to limit a ſovereign all-wiſe God, whoſe judgments are a great deep, and *his ways paſt finding out*, where he has not limited himſelf, and in things concerning which he has not told us what his way ſhall be with ſo very few.†

† N. B. *I do not know of one ſuch inſtance in* England.

3. Another thing that ſome make their rule to judge of this work by, inſtead of the holy ſcriptures, is hiſtory, or former obſervation. Theſe err two ways; *firſt*, If there be any thing new and extraordinary in the circumſtances of this work, that was not obſerved in former times, that is a rule with them to reject it. Herein they make that their rule that God has not made ſo; and limit God, where he has not limited himſelf. And this is eſpecially unreaſonable in this caſe. For whoſoever has well weighed the myſterious methods of divine wiſdom, in the progreſs of the work of redemption, from the firſt promiſe of the ſeed of the woman to this time, may eaſily obſerve that it has all along been God's manner to open new ſcenes, and to bring forth to view things new and wonderful, ſuch as *eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard.* As the old creation was carried on through ſix days, and appeared all compleat, ſettled in a ſtate of reſt on the ſeventh; ſo the new creation, which is immenſely the greateſt work, is carried on in a gradual progreſs, from the fall of man to the conſummation of all things. And as in the progreſs of the old creation there were ſtill new things accompliſhed; new wonders appeared every day in the ſight of the angels, the ſpectators of that work; new ſcenes were opened, things that they had not ſeen before, till the whole was finiſhed; ſo it is in the progreſs of the new creation. So that,

that

that promiſe, † *For ſince the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye ſeen, O God, beſides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him*; though it had a glorious fulfilment in the days of Chriſt and the apoſtles, as the words are applied, 1 Cor. ii. 9. yet it always remains to be fulfilled in things that are yet behind, till the new creation is finiſhed, at Chriſt's delivering up the kingdom to his Father.

And beſides, thoſe things in this work, that have been chiefly complained of as new, are not ſo new as has been generally imagined: though they have been much more frequent lately, in proportion to the uncommon degree, extent and ſwiftneſs, and other extraordinary circumſtances of the work, yet they are not new in their kind; but are things of the ſame nature as have been found in the church of God before, from time to time.

We have a remarkable inſtance in Mr. *Bolton*, that noted miniſter of the church of *England*, who being awakened by the preaching of the famous Mr. *Perkins*, in the univerſity of *Cambridge*, was ſubject to ſuch terrors as threw him to the ground, and cauſed him to roar with anguiſh; and the pangs of the new-birth in him were ſeen, that he lay pale and without ſenſe, like one dead. And we have another in the life of Mr. *George Troſſe*, of terrors by awakenings of conſcience, ſo over-

† Iſaiah lxiv. 4.

overpowering the body, as to deprive him, for some time, of the use of reason.

Yea, such extraordinary external effects of inward impressions have not only been found in here and there a single person, but there have also before now been times wherein they have appeared in congregations, in many at once. So in the year 1625, in the west of *Scotland*, it was a frequent thing for many to be so seized with terror in hearing of the word, by the Spirit of God, convincing them of sin, that they fell down, and were carried out of the church. Many in *France* also were so wonderfully affected with the preaching of the gospel, in the time of those famous divines *Farrel* and *Viret*, that for a time they could not follow their secular business: and many in *Ireland*, in the year 1628, were so filled with divine comforts, that they made but little use of either meat, drink or sleep, and professed they did not feel the need thereof.

Great outcries under awakenings were also frequently heard of, in former times, in this country, as some aged persons now living do testify: I think fit here to insert a testimony of my honoured father, of what he remembers formerly to have heard.

" I well remember, that one Mr. *Alexander* " *Allan*, a *Scots* gentleman of good credit, that " dwelt formerly in this town, shewed me a let- " ter that came from *Scotland*, that gave an ac- " count of a sermon preached in the city of *Edin-*

" *burgh*,

" *burgh*, in the time of the ſitting of the general " aſſembly of divines, which ſo affected the peo- " ple, that there was a great and loud cry made " throughout the aſſembly. I have alſo been " credibly informed, that it was a common thing, " when the famous Mr. *John Rogers*, of *Ded-* " *ham*, in *England*, was preaching, for ſome of " his hearers to cry out: and by what I have " heard, I conclude that it was uſual for many " that heard that awakening preacher of God's " word, to make a great cry in the congregation." *Windſor, May* 5, 1742. *Timothy Edwards.*

There have been inſtances alſo before now, of perſons crying out in tranſports of divine joy in *New-England*. We have an inſtance in Capt. *Clap*'s memoirs, not of a ſilly woman or child, but a man of ſolid underſtanding, that, in a high tranſport of ſpiritual joy, was made to cry out aloud on his bed. His words (p. 9.) are, " God's " Holy Spirit did witneſs with my ſpirit, that I " was a child of God; and did fill my heart and " ſoul with ſuch aſſurance that Chriſt was mine, " to make me cry out upon my bed, with a loud " voice, *He is come, he is come!*"

There has, before now, been both crying out and falling down, in this town, under awakenings of conſcience, and alſo in ſome of the neighbouring towns. In one of them, more than ſeven years ago, were a great number together that cried out and fell down under convictions.

And

And the Rev. Mr. *Williams*, of *Deerfield*, gave me an account of an aged man in that town, many years before that, that being awakened by his preaching, cried out aloud in the congregation. There have been many inſtances in this and ſome neighbouring towns, before now, of perſons fainting with joyful diſcoveries made to their ſouls; once ſeveral together in this town. And there alſo formerly have been ſeveral inſtances here of perſons fleſh waxing cold, benumbed, and their hands clinched; yea, their bodies being ſet into convulſions, being overpowered with a ſtrong ſenſe of the aſtoniſhingly great and excellent things of God and the eternal world.

4. I would propoſe it to be conſidered, whether ſome, inſtead of making the ſcriptures their only rule to judge of this work, do not make *their own experience* the rule, and reject ſuch things, becauſe they never felt them themſelves. Are there not many that have entertained ſuſpicions, if not peremptory condemnations, of thoſe extreme terrors, and thoſe great diſcoveries of the glorious perfections of God, and of the beauty and love of Chriſt; and ſuch vehement affections, ſuch high tranſports of love and joy, and exerciſes of mind, that have ſuch great effects on perſons bodies, becauſe they knew nothing about them by experience? It is to be feared many good men have been guilty of this error; which yet does not make it the leſs unreaſonable. And perhaps there are ſome that upon this ground do not

not only reject theſe extraordinary things, but all ſuch conviction of ſin, and ſuch diſcoveries of the glory of God, and excellency of Chriſt, and inward conviction of the truth of the goſpel, by the immediate influence of the Spirit of God, as are neceſſary to ſalvation.

III. Another fundamental error of thoſe that reject this work is, their *not duly diſtinguiſhing the good from the bad*, and ſo rejecting the work in general, for the ſake of ſome things, which are accidental to it, that are evil. They look for more in men that are ſubject to the operations of a good ſpirit, than is juſtly to be expected from them, in this imperfect ſtate, and dark world, where ſo much blindneſs remains in the beſt. When any profeſs to have received light and comforts from heaven, and to have had communion with God, many are ready to expect that now they appear like angels, and not ſtill like poor, feeble, blind and ſinful worms. That ſo much corruption is left in the hearts of God's own children, was always a ſtumbling-block to the world; but it will not be wondered at, by thoſe that are duly mindful of two things; *firſt*, the word of God, which teaches us the ſtate of Chriſtians in this world: and *ſecondly*, their own heart, at leaſt if they have any grace, and have experience of its conflicts with corruption. If all our conduct, both open and ſecret, ſhould be known, and our hearts laid open to the world;

how

how ſhould we be even ready to flee from the light of the ſun, and hide ourſelves from the view of mankind? And what great allowances ſhould we need that others ſhould make for us? Perhaps much greater than we are willing to make for others.

* The great weakneſs of the bigger part of mankind, in any affair that is new and uncommon, appears in not diſtinguiſhing; but either approving or condemning all in the lump. They that highly approve of the affair in general, cannot bear to have any thing at all found fault with: and, on the other hand, thoſe that faſten their eyes upon ſome things that are amiſs, at once reject the whole. But it is raſh and unjuſt, when we proceed thus in judging either of a particular perſon, or a people, or of ſuch an affair as the preſent influence on the minds of the people of this land. Yet ſo it is; many if they ſee any thing ill in a particular perſon, will at once brand him as an hypocrite. And, if there be two or three of a people or ſociety, that behave themſelves irregularly, the whole muſt bear the blame of it. If there be a few, though it may be not above one in an hundred, that had a ſhew of being the happy partakers of the benefits of this work, who prove naught in the end, the whole work muſt be rejected on their account; and thoſe in general, that make the like profeſſion, muſt be condemned for their ſakes.

2. So

2. So careful are some persons left this work should be defended, that now they will hardly allow that the influences of the Spirit of God on the heart can so much as *indirectly*, and *accidentally*, be the occasion of sin.—Thus far is true, that this influence won't be an occasion of the increase of the corruption of the heart in general, but of the weakening of it; yet there is nothing unreasonable in supposing, that at the same time it weakens corruption in general, it may be an occasion of the turning what is left into a new channel, and so of there being more of some certain kinds of the exercise of corruption than there was before; as that which tends to hinder and stop the course of a stream, if it do not do it wholly, may give a new course to so much of the water as gets by the obstacle. The influences of the Spirit, for instance, may be an occasion of new ways of the exercise of *pride*. This was not doubted of, till now it is found to be needful to maintain the war against this work.

But I suppose all will allow, that the influences of the Spirit of God, yea, and an high degree of love to God, is consistent with these two things, *viz.* a considerable degree of remaining corruption, and also many errors of judgment in matters of religion, and in matters of practice. And this is all that need to be allowed, in order to its being demonstratively evident that even love to God may accidentally move a person to that which is contrary to the will of God.

God. For a high degree of love to God will ſtrongly move a perſon to do that which he believes to be agreeable to God's will; and therefore, if he be miſtaken, and be perſuaded that is agreeable to the will of God, which indeed is contrary to it, then his love will accidentally incline him to that which is indeed contrary to the will of God.

3. Farther; true diſciples of Chriſt may have a great deal of falſe zeal, ſuch as the diſciples had of old, when they would have fire called for from heaven to come down on the *Samaritans*, and even ſo great a ſaint as *Moſes*, who converſed with God, as a man with his friend, and concerning whom God gives his teſtimony, that he *was very meek, above any man upon the face of the earth*, yet may be raſh and ſinful in his zeal, ſo as to ſpeak unadviſedly with his lips. Yea, man, in thoſe very things wherein they are influenced by a pious principle, yet thro' error and want of due conſideration may be very raſh with their zeal. It was a truly good ſpirit that animated that excellent generation of *Iſrael* that was in *Joſhua*'s time, in that affair that we have an account of in the 22d chapter of *Joſhua*; and yet they were raſh and heady with their zeal, to go about to gather all *Iſrael* to go up furiouſly to war with their brethern of the two tribes and half, about their building the altar *Ed*, without firſt enquiring into the matter, or ſo much as ſending a meſſenger to be informed. So the Chriſtians

Chriſtians that were of the circumciſion condemned *Peter* for receiving *Cornelius*, though there is all appearance that they acted from a real concern for the will and honour of God. So the primitive Chriſtians, from their zeal for and againſt unclean meats, cenſured and condemned one another: this was a bad effect, and yet the apoſtle bears them witneſs, that both ſides acted from a good principle, *Rom.* xiv. 6. The zeal of the *Corinthians* with reſpect to the inceſtuous man, though the apoſtle highly commends it, yet at the ſame time needed a caution, leſt they ſhould carry it too far, ſo as to fail of Chriſtian meekneſs and forgiveneſs.†

4. It ſurely cannot be wondered at by conſiderate perſons, that at a time when multitudes have their affections greatly moved, many ſhould run into errors and miſtakes with reſpect to their duty, and conſequently into practices that are imprudent and irregular. I queſtion whether there be a man in *New-England*, of the ſtrongeſt reaſon and greateſt learning, but what would be put to it to keep maſter of himſelf, thoroughly to weigh his words, and conſider all the the conſequences of his behaviour, if he were ſo ſtrongly impreſſed with a ſenſe of divine things, and his affections ſo exceedingly moved, as has been frequent of late among the common people. How little then do they conſider human nature, who think it ſo inſuperable a ſtumbling-block, when ſuch

† 2 Cor. ii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and Chap. vii. 11, to the end.

ſuch multitudes of all kinds of capacities, natural tempers, educations, cuſtoms, and manners of life, are ſo greatly and variouſly affected, that imprudencies ſhould abound; eſpecially in a ſtate of things ſo uncommon, and when the degree, extent, ſwiftneſs, and power of the operation is ſo extraordinary and ſo new, that there has not been time and experience enough to give birth to rules for peoples conduct, and ſo unuſual in times paſt, that the writings of divines do not afford rules to direct us in ſuch a ſtate of things?

* A great deal of noiſe and tumult, and darkneſs mixed with light, is to be expected in the beginning of ſomething very extraordinary and very glorious in the ſtate of things in human ſociety, or the church of God. As after nature has long been ſhut up in a cold dead ſtate, when the ſun returns in the ſpring there is, together with the increaſe of light and heat, very dirty and tempeſtuous weather before all is ſettled calm and ſerene, and all nature rejoices in its bloom and beauty. It is in the new creation as it was in the old, the Spirit of God firſt moved upon the waters, which was an occaſion of uproar and tumult, and things were gradually brought to a ſettled ſtate, till at length all ſtood forth in that beautiful peaceful order, when the heavens and the earth were finiſhed, *and* God *ſaw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* When God is about to bring to paſs ſomething great

great and glorious in the world, nature is in a ferment and ſtruggle, and the world as it were in travail; as when God was about to introduce the *Meſſiah* into the world, and the new and glorious diſpenſation that he ſet up, *he ſhook the heavens and the earth.*

* 5. The weakneſs of human nature has always appeared in times of a great revival of religion, by a diſpoſition to run to extremes, eſpecially in theſe three things, enthuſiaſm, ſuperſtition, and intemperate zeal. So it appeared in the time of the reformation; and alſo in the days of the apoſtles, many were then exceedingly diſpoſed to lay weight on thoſe things that were notional and chimerical, giving heed to fables and whimſies, as appears by 1 *Tim.* i. 4. and iv. 7. 2 *Tim.* ii. 16. and ver. 23. and *Tit.* i. 14. and iii. 9. Many, as eccleſiaſtical hiſtory informs us, fell off into the moſt wild enthuſiaſm; and many into ſuperſtition, will-worſhip, and a voluntary humility, giving heed to the commandments of men. And what a proneneſs then appeared to ſwerve from the ſpirit of the goſpel, by raſh indiſcreet zeal, cenſuring and condemning miniſters and people; one ſaying, I am of *Paul*; another, I am of *Apollos*; another, I am of *Cephas*; judging one another for differences of opinion about ſmaller matters, unclean meats, holy days and holy places, and their civil intercourſe and communication with their heathen neighbours? And how much did vain jangling and

and diſputing prevail under the name of religious zeal? 2 *Tim.* vi. 4, 5. 2 *Tim.* ii. 16. and *Tit.* iii. 9. What a taſk had the apoſtles to keep them within bounds, and maintain good order in the churches? How often are they mentioning their irregularities? The prevailing of ſuch like diſorders ſeems to have been the ſpecial occaſion of writing many of their epiſtles. The church in that great effuſion of the ſpirit that was then, was under the care of infallible guides, that watched over them day and night; but yet ſo prone were they, through the corruption of nature, to get out of the way, that irregularity and confuſion roſe to a very great height, even in the apoſtles life time, and under their eye. And though ſome of the apoſtles lived long to ſettle the ſtate of things, yet, preſently after they were dead, the Chriſtian church ran into many ſuperſtitions and childiſh notions and practices. And let any wiſe perſon, that has not in the midſt of diſpute got beyond the calmneſs of conſideration, impartially conſider to what lengths we may reaſonably ſuppoſe many of the primitive Chriſtians would have gone if they had had no inſpired guides; and whether it is not probable that the church of *Corinth* in particular, would in a little time have broke to pieces, and diſſolved in a ſtate of the utmoſt confuſion? And yet this would have been no evidence that there had not been a glorious work of the Spirit in that city. But as for us, we have no infallible apoſtle

to

to rectify diſorders and reclaim us when we are wandering; but they that are got into a wrong path continue to wander till experience of the miſchievous iſſue convinces them of their error.

* 6. If we look over this affair, and ſeriouſly weigh it in its circumſtances, it may eaſily be accounted for, how many ſhould run into great errors, and juſt ſuch errors as they have. It is known, that ſome that have been great inſtruments to promote this work have been very young; and how natural is it for ſuch as are themſelves newly waked out of ſleep, and have a new and wonderful ſcene opened to them, who have in view the reality, the vaſtneſs and infinite importance and nearneſs of ſpiritual and eternal things; and at the ſame time ſee the world aſleep about them, who have not the advantage of age and experience, and have had but little opportunity to ſtudy divinity, or to converſe with aged experienced Chriſtians and divines: I ſay, how natural is it for ſuch to fall into many errors with reſpect to the ſtate of mankind, and with reſpect to the methods of their relief? Is it any wonder that they have not at once learned how to make all the allowances that are to be made, and that they do not at once find out that method of dealing with the world that is adapted to the myſterious ſtate and nature of mankind? Is it any wonder that they cannot at once foreſee what the conſequences of things will be, what

evils are to be guarded againſt, and what difficulties are like to ariſe that are to be provided for?

We have long been in a ſtrange ſtupor: the inſtances of the Spirit of God upon the heart have been but little felt, and the nature of them but little taught, ſo that they are in many reſpects new to great numbers of thoſe that have lately fallen under them. And is it any wonder if they that never before had experience of the ſupernatural influence of the divine Spirit upon their ſouls, and never were inſtructed in the nature of theſe influences, do not ſo well know how to diſtinguiſh one impreſſion from another, and ſo inſenſibly run into *enthuſiaſm*, taking every ſtrong impreſſion to be divine? How natural is it to ſuppoſe, that among the multitudes of illiterate people (moſt of which are in their youth) who find themſelves ſo wonderfully changed, and brought into ſuch new, and before (to them) almoſt unheard-of circumſtances, many ſhould paſs wrong judgments of both perſons and things that are about them; and that, now they behold them in ſuch a new light, they ſhould go further from the judgment they were wont to make of them than they ought, and paſs from one extreme to another? And why ſhould it be thought ſtrange, that thoſe that ſcarce ever heard of any ſuch thing as pouring out of the Spirit of God before; or, if they did, had no notion of it, do not know how to behave themſelves in ſuch a new and ſtrange ſtate of things?

When

When these persons are extraordinarily affected with a fresh discovery of the greatness of the divine Being, the infinite importance of eternal things, and the dreadful danger and madness of mankind, together with a great sense of God's kindness and love to them; no wonder that they know not how to sit still and forbear speaking and acting with uncommon earnestness and vigour. And if they be not persons of more than common steadiness and discretion, or have not some person of wisdom to direct them, it is a wonder if they do not proceed without due caution, and do things that are irregular.

7. *Censuring others*, is the worst disease with which this affair has been attended: but yet such a time is indeed a time of great temptation to it. When there has been such great and long-continued deadness, and many are brought out of a state of nature into a state of grace, in so extraordinary a manner, and filled with such uncommon degrees of light, it is natural for such to form their notions of a state of grace wholly from what they experience.

Though censoriousness be a thing that is very sinful, yet it is not found in hypocrites only: *Job*'s three friends seem to have been eminently holy men, who yet censured the best man on earth, very positively determining that he was an unconverted man; yea, *Job* himself, that particularly excelled in a humble, meek, and patient

ſpirit, was guilty of bitterly cenſuring his three friends, as wicked, vile hypocrites.

Thus I think the errors and irregularities that attend this work may be accounted for, from the conſideration of the weakneſs and common corruption of mankind, together with the circumſtances of the work, though we ſhould ſuppoſe it to be the work of God. And it would not be a juſt objection in any one to ſay, If theſe impreſſions are from God, why does not the ſame Spirit give ſtrength of underſtanding and capacity in proportion to thoſe perſons that are the ſubjects of them, ſo that ſtrong affections may not, through their error, drive them to an irregular conduct? For I do not know that God has any where obliged himſelf to do it. The end of the influences of God's Spirit is to make men wiſe to ſalvation; and he has alſo appointed means for our gaining ſuch degrees of other knowledge as we need to conduct ourſelves regularly, which means ſhould be carefully uſed; but the end of the influence of the Spirit of God is not to increaſe mens natural capacities, nor has God obliged himſelf immediately to increaſe civil prudence in proportion to the degree of ſpiritual light.

* 8. If we conſider the errors that attend this work, not only as from man and his infirmity, but alſo as from God, and by his permiſſion and diſpoſal, they are not ſtrange, though it be as to the ſubſtance the work of God. If God intends this great revival of religion to be the dawning

of

of an happy ſtate of his church, it may be an inſtance of the divine wiſdom, in the beginning of it, to ſuffer ſo many irregularities in conduct. For it will be very likely to be of excellent benefit to his church, in the continuance and progreſs of the work. The experience, in the firſt ſetting out, of the miſchievous conſequences of theſe errors, may be an happy defence to them afterwards, for many generations.

And it is very analogous to the manner of God's dealing with his people, to permit a great deal of infirmity to appear, in the beginning of a glorious work of his grace, to humble them, and fit them for that proſperity he is about to advance them to, and the more to ſecure to himſelf the honour of ſuch a glorious work. For, by man's exceeding weakneſs, it is evident that God does not lay the foundation of it in man's ſtrength or wiſdom.

And as we need not wonder at the errors that attend this work, if we look at the hand of men that are guilty of them, and the hand of God in permitting them: ſo neither, if we conſider the hand that Satan has in them. For as this work is much greater than any other that has ever been in *New-England*, ſo no wonder that the devil is more alarmed and enraged, and exerts himſelf more vigorouſly againſt it, and does more powerfully endeavour to tempt and miſlead thoſe that are the ſubjects or promoters of it.

Whatever imprudences there have been, and whatever vehemence of the paſſions, and heats

of the imagination; whatever error in judgment and indiſcreet zeal; and whatever outcries, and faintings, and agitations of body; yet it is manifeſt and notorious, that there has been of late a very uncommon influence upon the minds of very many people, that has been attended with the following effects, *viz.* a great increaſe of ſerioufneſs and ſober conſideration of the things of the eternal world; a diſpoſition to hearken to any thing that is ſaid of things of this nature with attention and affection; a diſpoſition to hear matters of religion with ſolemnity, and as matters of great importance; a diſpoſition to make theſe things the ſubject of converſation; and a great diſpoſition to hear the word of God preached, to take all opportunities in order to it; and to attend on the public worſhip of God, and all external duties of religion, in a more ſolemn and decent manner. Multitudes of vain, thoughtleſs perſons, are quite changed, and become ſerious and conſiderate; there is a vaſt increaſe of concern for the ſalvation of the ſoul, and of that enquiry, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* The hearts of multitudes have been greatly taken off from the things of the world, in profits, pleaſures and honours; and have been made ſenſible of the pernicious conſequences of ſin, and what a dreadful thing it is to lie under the diſpleaſure of God: they have alſo been awakened to a ſenſe of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, and the reality of another world: they are more afraid of ſin, more careful to know

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what is contrary to the will of God, that they may avoid it, and what he requires of them, that they may do it; more watchful over their own hearts, earneſtly deſirous of being informed what are the means for their ſalvation, and diligent in the uſe of thoſe that God has appointed in order to it. Many very ſtupid, ſenſeleſs ſinners, have been greatly awakened. There is a ſtrange alteration amongſt young people: by a powerful influence on their minds, they have been brought to forſake thoſe things, as it were at once, that they were extremely fond of, and that they ſeemed to place the happineſs of their lives in, and which nothing before could induce them to forſake; as their vain company, their mirth and jollity, their impure language and lewd ſongs: in vain did miniſters preach againſt thoſe things before, and in vain were laws made to reſtrain them, and in vain was all the vigilance of magiſtrates and civil officers; but now they have dropt them as it were of themſelves. And there is a great alteration amongſt old and young as to drinking, profane ſpeaking, and extravagance in apparel. Many notoriouſly vicious perſons have been reformed and become externally new creatures: Some that are wealthy and of a faſhionable, gay education, that ſeemed to have their minds ſwallowed up with the ſhew and pleaſures of the world, have relinquiſhed theſe vanities, and are become ſerious, mortified and humble in their converſation. It is aſtoniſh-

ing to see the alteration that is in some places, where before was no appearance of religion: and now they are transformed into another sort of people; and are, as it were, gone to a new world: their thoughts, and their talk, and their concern, affections and enquiries, are now about the favour of God, an interest in Christ, and a spiritual blessedness, and acceptance and happiness in a future world. And, through the greater part of *New-England*, the holy bible is in much greater esteem and use than it used to be: the great things that are contained in it, are much more the subjects of meditation and conversation; and other books of piety have been abundantly more in use; the Lord's day is more religiously observed; and abundance has been lately done at making up differences, and confessing faults one to another, and making restitution; probably more within these two years, than was done in thirty years before. And surprizing has been the power of that Spirit that has been poured out on the land, to destroy old grudges, and make up long-continued breaches, and to bring those that seemed to be irreconcilable, to embrace each other in a sincere and entire amity.

Great numbers have been brought to a deep sense of their own sinfulness and vileness; the sinfulness of their lives, the heinousness of their disregard of the authority of the great God, and the heinousness of their living in contempt of a Saviour: and many persons have had such a sense

a ſenſe of their own ſinfulneſs, that they thought themſelves to be the worſt of all, and that none ever was ſo vile as they. And ſo far as we are worthy to be credited one by another, in what we ſay, (and perſons of good underſtanding and ſound mind, and known and experienced probity, have a right to be believed by their neighbours, when they ſpeak of things that fall under their obſervation and experience) multitudes have lately been brought to ſweet reſt of ſoul in Chriſt as a glorious Saviour, a ſtrong rock and high tower; accompanied with a ſenſible, ſtrong and ſweet love to God, far ſurpaſſing all earthly pleaſures; and a reſt of ſoul in him, as a portion and the fountain of all good; attended with an abhorrence of ſin, and earneſt longings after more holineſs and conformity to God, with a ſenſe of the great need of God's help in order to holineſs of life; together with a moſt dear love to all that are ſuppoſed to be the children of God and a love to mankind in general, and a moſt tender compaſſion for the ſouls of ſinners, and earneſt deſires of the advancement of Chriſt's kingdom.

And many little children have been remarkably inlightened, their hearts wonderfully affected and inlarged, and their mouths opened, in a manner far beyond their years, to the juſt aſtoniſhment of thoſe that heard them; ſome of theſe are ſtill greatly affected with the glory of divine things, and the excellence and love of the Redeemer, having their hearts filled with

love to and joy in him, and continuing ſerious and pious in their behaviour.

9. And now let us conſider.——Is it not ſtrange that, in a Chriſtian country, there ſhould be any at a loſs whoſe work this is, whether the work of God or of the devil? Is it not a ſhame to *New-England* that ſuch a work ſhould be doubted of here? Need we look over the hiſtories of all paſt times, to ſee if there be not ſome circumſtances and external appearances that attend this work, that have been formerly found among enthuſiaſts? We need not ſay, *Who ſhall aſcend into heaven*, to bring us ſomething whereby to judge of this work? Nor does God ſend us down beyond the ſeas, nor into paſt ages, to obtain a rule that ſhall ſatisfy us: but we have a rule near at hand, a ſacred book that God himſelf has put into our hands, with clear and infallible marks ſufficient to reſolve us; which book we muſt reject, not only in ſome particular paſſages, but in the ſubſtance of it, if we reject ſuch a work, as not being the work of God. The whole tenor of the goſpel proves it; all the notion of religion that the ſcripture gives us confirms it.

I ſuppoſe there is ſcarcely a miniſter in this land, but has prayed that God would pour out his Spirit, work a reformation and revival of religion, and turn us from our intemperance, profaneneſs, uncleanneſs, worldlineſs and other ſins; and we have kept from year to year days of public faſting and prayer to God, to humble ourſelves for our ſins, and to ſeek of God forgiveneſs and reforma-

reformation; and now when ſo great and extenſive reformation is ſo ſuddenly and wonderfully accompliſhed, in thoſe very things that we have ſought to God for, ſhall we not acknowledge it? And that becauſe (altho' indeed there be ſuch a work, attended with all theſe glorious effects, yet) the work is attended with a mixture of error and imprudencies; becauſe ſome perſons are carried away with impreſſions, and are indiſcreet, and too cenſorious with their zeal; and becauſe there are high tranſports of religious affections, and becauſe of ſome effects on perſons bodies that we do not underſtand?

10. Thoſe that are waiting for the fruits, in order to determine whether this be the work God or no, would do well to conſider two things; 1. What they are waiting for: whether it be not this; to have this influence that is on the minds of people over, and then to ſee how they will behave themſelves? That is, to have grace ſubſide, and perſons grow cold and dead; and then to ſee whether they will behave themſelves with that exactneſs and brightneſs of converſation, that is to be expected of lively Chriſtians. There are many that will not be ſatisfied with any exactneſs now; for they lay it to their heat of zeal, as they call it, they are waiting to ſee whether they will carry themſelves as well when theſe affections are over: that is, they are waiting to have perſons ſicken and loſe their ſtrength, that they may ſee whether they will then behave themſelves like healthy ſtrong men. I would deſire

that they would alſo conſider whether they be not waiting for more than is reaſonably to be expected, ſuppoſing this to be really a great work of God? Do not they expect fewer inſtances of apoſtacy, and evidences of hypocriſy, in thoſe that for the preſent ſeem to be under the influences of the Spirit, than were after that great out-pouring of the Spirit in the apoſtles days? And do not they ſtand prepared to make a mighty argument of it againſt this work, if there ſhould be *half* ſo many? And, 2. They would do well to conſider how *long* they will wait to ſee the good fruit of this work, before they will determine in favour of it. Is not their waiting unlimited? The viſible fruit that is to be expected of a pouring-out of the Spirit of God on a country, is a viſible reformation in that country: what reformation has lately been brought to paſs by this work, has been before obſerved; and has it not continued long enough already, to give reaſonable ſatisfaction? Surely it is unreaſonable that our expectations and demands ſhould be unlimited, and our waiting without any bounds.

11. As there is the cleareſt evidence, from thoſe things that have been obſerved, that this is the work of God; ſo it is evident that it is a very great and wonderful, and exceeding glorious work of God. This is certain, that it is a great and wonderful event, a ſtrange revolution, an unexpected, ſurprizing overturning of things, ſuddenly brought to paſs; ſuch as never has been ſeen

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in *New-England*, and ſcarce ever has been heard of in any land. Who that ſaw the ſtate of things in *New-England* a few years ago, the ſtate that it was ſettled in, and the way that we had been ſo long going on in, would have thought that in ſo little time there would be ſuch a change?

Such a work is, in its nature, the moſt glorious of any work of God whatſoever, and is always ſo ſpoken of in ſcripture. It is the work of redemption (the great end of all other works of God, and of which the work of creation was but a ſhadow) in the event, ſucceſs and end of it: it is the work of new creation, that is infinitely more glorious than the old. I am bold to ſay, that the work of God in the converſion of one ſoul, is a more glorious work of God than the creation of the whole material univerſe. It is the moſt glorious of God's works, as it above all others manifeſts the glory of God; as it ſhews *the exceeding greatneſs of God's power, and the glory and riches of his grace*; wherein Chriſt has the moſt glorious triumph over his enemies, and wherein God is moſt exalted; and it is a work above all others glorious, as it concerns the happineſs of mankind; more happineſs, and a greater benefit to man, is the fruit of each ſingle drop of ſuch a ſhower, than all the temporal good of the moſt happy revolution in a land or nation amounts to, or all that a people could gain by the conqueſt of the world.

And

And as this work is very glorious in its *nature*, ſo it is in the *extent* of it; being in this reſpect vaſtly beyond any that ever was known in *New-England*. There has formerly ſometimes been a remarkable awakening, in ſome particular congregation: but now God has brought to paſs a new thing, he has wrought a great work of this nature, that has extended from one end of the land to the other, beſides what has been wrought in other *Britiſh* colonies in *America*.

The work is very glorious in the great *numbers* that have been turned from ſin to God. How high an honour, and great reward of their labours, have ſome eminent perſons ſignified that they ſhould eſteem it, if they ſhould be made the inſtruments of the converſion of but *one* ſoul? No greater event than that is thought worthy of great notice in heaven, amongſt the hoſts of glorious angels, who rejoice and ſing on ſuch an occaſion: and when there are many thouſands converted, ſhall it be eſteemed worth but little notice, and be mentioned with coldneſs and indifference here on earth, by thoſe among whom ſuch a work is wrought?

The work has been very glorious and wonderful in many *circumſtances* of it, wherein God has in an uncommon manner made his power conſpicuous: as in the extraordinary *degrees* of awakening, the *ſuddenneſs* of converſions in innumerable inſtances, in whom though the work was quick, yet the thing wrought is manifeſtly durable.

ble. How common a thing has it been for great part of a congregation to be at once moved by a mighty invisible power; and for six, eight or ten souls to be converted to God at once, in whom the visible change still continues? How great an alteration has been made in some populous towns, the change still abiding? And how many very vicious persons have been wrought upon, so as to become visibly new creatures? God has also made his hand very visible, and his work glorious, in the many little children that have been wrought upon, any one of which formerly would have been thought so remarkable, as to be worthy to be recorded, and published through the land.

The work is also exceeding glorious in the high *attainments* of Christians, in the extraordinary degrees of light, love and spiritual joy, that God has bestowed upon great multitudes. In this respect too, the land in all parts has abounded with instances, any one of which, if they had happened formerly, would have been thought worthy to be taken notice of throughout the *British* dominions. The *New Jerusalem* in this respect has begun to come down from heaven, and perhaps never were more of the prelibations of heaven's glory given upon earth.

There being a great many errors and irregularities mixed with this work of God, arising from our weakness, darkness and corruption, does not hinder it from being very glorious. Our follies and sins that we mix, do in some respects manifest

feſt the glory of it: the glory of divine power and grace is ſet off with the greater luſtre, by what appears at the ſame time of the weakneſs of the earthen veſſel. It is God's pleaſure that there ſhould be ſomething remarkable to manifeſt the weakneſs and unworthineſs of the ſubject, at the ſame time that he diſplays the excellency of his power and riches of his grace. And I doubt not but ſome of thoſe things that make us here to look on this work with a diſpleaſed countenance, heighten the ſongs of the angels, when they praiſe God and the Lamb, for the glory of God's all-ſufficiency, and efficacy of Chriſt's redemption.

PART II.

Shewing the obligation that all are under to acknowledge, rejoice in, and promote this work.

1. THERE are many things in the word of God, which ſhew that when God remarkably appears for his church, and againſt his enemies, it is a moſt dangerous thing to be ſlow and backward to acknowledge God in the work. Chriſt's people are in ſcripture repreſented as his army: he is the Lord of hoſts or armies; he is the Captain of the hoſt of the Lord, the Captain of his people's

people's salvation: and therefore it may well be highly resented, if they do not resort to him when he orders his banner to be displayed; if they refuse to follow him when he blows the trumpet, and gloriously appears going forth against his enemies. God expects that every living soul should have his attention roused on such an occasion, should cheerfully yield to the call, and heedfully and diligently obey it: *All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye when he lifted up an ensign on the mountains; and when he bloweth the trumpet, hear ye.* Isa. lxviii. 3. How severe is the martial law in such a case, when any of an army refuses to obey the sound of the trumpet, and follow his general to the battle? God at such a time appears in peculiar manifestations of his glory; and therefore to lie still, and refuse to follow God, will be resented as an high contempt of him.

At a time when God manifests himself in such a work for his church, there is no such thing as being neuters; there is a necessity of being either for or against the King that then gloriously appears. So it was when Christ came down from heaven in his incarnation, and appeared on earth in his human presence; there was no such thing as being, neither on his side nor against him: those that sat still and said nothing, and did not declare for him, and come and join with him, after he, by his word and works, had given sufficient evidence who he

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was, were juſtly looked upon as his enemies; as Chriſt ſays, *Matth.* xii. 30. *He that is not with me is againſt me; and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth abroad.* So it is in a time when Chriſt is remarkably ſpiritually preſent, as well as when he is bodily preſent; and when he comes to carry on the work of redemption in the application of it, as well as in the revelation and purchaſe. If a king ſhould come into one of his provinces, that had been oppreſſed by its foes, where ſome of his ſubjects had fallen off to the enemy, and joined with them againſt their lawful ſovereign; I ſay, if the lawful ſovereign himſelf ſhould come into the province, and ſhould ride forth there againſt his enemies, and ſhould call upon all that were on his ſide to come and gather themſelves to him; there would be no ſuch thing, in ſuch a caſe, as ſtanding neuter; they that lay ſtill and ſtaid at a diſtance would undoubtedly be looked upon and treated as rebels. So in the day of battle, when two armies join, there is no ſuch thing for any preſent as being of neither party; all muſt be on one ſide or the other; and they that are not found with the conqueror in ſuch a caſe, muſt expect to fall with the reſt of his enemies.

2. When God manifeſts himſelf with ſuch glorious power, he appears eſpecially determined to put honour upon his Son, and to fulfil his oath, that he would *make every knee to bow, and every tongue*

tongue to confeſs him. Such a day is a day of his power, wherein he ſhall rule in the midſt of his enemies; theſe eſpecially are the times wherein God declares his firm decree, that his Son ſhall *reign on his holy hill of Zion:* and therefore thoſe that at ſuch a time do not *kiſs the Son*, as he then appears in the glory of his majeſty, expoſe themſelves to *periſh from the way*, and to be *daſhed in pieces with a rod of iron.*

It always is ſo, that when Chriſt is in a peculiar manner manifeſted by a glorious work of God in his church, as a foundation and a ſanctuary for ſome, he is a ſtone of ſtumbling and a rock of offence to others. They that continue long to be offended at ſuch a work of Chriſt, ſtumble at Chriſt, and are offended in him. But how dangerous is it to continue always ſtumbling at ſuch a work, for ever doubting of it, and forbearing fully to acknowledge it, and give God the glory of it! Such perſons are in danger to *go and fall backward, and be broken, and ſnared and taken*, and to have Chriſt *a ſtone of ſtumbling* to them, that ſhall be an occaſion of their ruin.

3. The church is called upon greatly to rejoice, when at any time Chriſt remarkably appears to enlarge his own kingdom, and to deliver poor ſouls out of the pit wherein there is no water. In *Zech.* ix. 9, 10, 11. *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; ſhout, O daughter of Jeruſalem; behold,*

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thy King cometh unto thee; he is juſt, and having ſalvation. Chriſt was pleaſed to give a typical repreſentation of ſuch an event, in his ſolemn entry into *Jeruſalem*, which was a type of the church or daughter of *Zion* there ſpoken of, probably intending it as a figure of that great actual fulfilment of this prophecy, that was to be after his aſcenſion. When he made this his ſolemn entry into *Jeruſalem*, and the whole multitude of the diſciples were rejoicing and praiſing God with loud voices, for all the mighty works that they had ſeen, the Phariſees ſaid, *Maſter, rebuke thy diſciples*; but we are told, *Luke* xix. 39, 40. *He anſwered and ſaid unto them, I tell you, that if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out.* Signifying, that if Chriſt's diſciples ſhould be unaffected on ſuch an occaſion, and ſhould not appear openly to acknowledge and rejoice in the glory of God, it would manifeſt ſuch a fearful hardneſs of heart, that the very ſtones would condemn them. Should not this make thoſe conſider who have held their peace ſo long, ſince Chriſt has ſo wonderfully manifeſted his glory in this mighty work of his Spirit, and ſo many of his diſciples have been *rejoicing and praiſing* God *with loud voices?*

4. The great danger of not joining with God's people at that glorious day is alſo repreſented, *Iſa.* xl. 12. *For the nation and kingdom that will not ſerve thee ſhall periſh; yea, thoſe nations ſhall be utterly waſted.*

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Moſt of the great temporal deliverances that were wrought for *Iſrael* of old, as expoſitors obſerve, were typical of the great ſpiritual works of God for the ſalvation of mens ſouls, and the proſperity of his church in the days of the goſpel; and eſpecially of that great work of actual ſalvation that ſhall be in the latter days, which, is above all others the appointed time, and proper ſeaſon of actual redemption of mens ſouls. But it may be obſerved, that if any appeared to oppoſe God's work in thoſe great temporal deliverances; or if there was any of his people that on ſuch an occaſion lay ſtill and ſtood at a diſtance, and did not ariſe and acknowledge God in his work, and appear to promote it, it was what in a remarkable manner incenſed God's anger, and brought his curſe upon ſuch perſons.

5. That was a glorious work of God that he wrought for *Iſrael*, when he delivered them from the *Canaanites*, by the hand of *Deborah* and *Barak:* which makes *Deborah* exulting to ſay, *Judg.* v. 31. *O my ſoul, thou haſt trodden down ſtrength!* Chriſt with his heavenly hoſt was engaged in that battle; and therefore it is ſaid, ver. 20. *They fought from heaven, the ſtars in their courſes fought againſt* Sifera. The work of God therefore, in this victory and deliverance wrought for *Iſrael*, was a type of that victory and deliverance which he will accompliſh for his church in that great battle, that laſt conflict that the church ſhall have with her open enemies, as appears by

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Rev. xvi. 16. (ſpeaking of that great battle) *And he gathered them together into a place, called in the Hebrew tongue* Armageddon, *i. e.* the mountain of *Megiddo*; alluding to the place where the battle was fought with the hoſt of *Siſera*, *Judg.* v. 19. *The kings came and fought, the kings of* Canaan *in* Taanach, *by the waters of* Megiddo. Which can ſignify nothing elſe than that this battle, which Chriſt and his church ſhall have with their enemies, is the antitype of the battle that was fought there. But what a dreadful curſe did ſome of *Iſrael* bring upon themſelves, by lying ſtill at that time, and not putting to an helping hand? *Judg.* v. 23. *Curſe ye* Meroz, *ſaid the angel of the Lord, curſe ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* It ſeems the inhabitants of *Meroz* were unbelieving concerning this great work, nor would they hearken to *Deborah*'s pretences, nor did it enter into them that ſuch a poor company ſhould ever prevail againſt thoſe that were ſo mighty; they did not acknowledge the hand of God, and therefore ſtood at a diſtance, and did nothing to promote the work: but what a bitter curſe did they bring upon themſelves by it!

It is very probable that one great reaſon why the inhabitants of *Meroz* were ſo unbelieving concerning this work, was, that they argued *a priori*; they did not like the beginning of it, it being a woman that firſt led the way, and had the chief conduct

conduct in the affair; nor could they believe that such despicable instruments, as a company of unarmed slaves, were ever like to effect so great a thing; and pride and unbelief wrought together, in not being willing to follow *Deborah* to the battle.

6. It was another glorious work of God that he wrought in the victory obtained by *Gideon* over the *Midianites* and *Amalekites*, and the children of the east, when they came up like grashoppers, a multitude that could not be numbered. This also was a remarkable type of the victory of Christ and his church over his enemies; as is evident by the manner of it, which was not by human sword or bow, but only of blowing of trumpets, and by lights in earthen vessels. We read that on this occasion *Gideon* called the people together to help in this great affair; and that accordingly great numbers resorted to him, and came to the help of the Lord, *Judg.* vii. 23, 24. But there were some that were unbelieving, and would not acknowledge the hand of God in that work. They were the inhabitants of *Succoth* and *Penuel*. *Gideon* desired their help when he was pursuing after *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*; but they despised his pretences, and his confidence of the Lord's being on his side, to deliver those two great princes into the hands of such a despicable company as he and his three hundred men. God proceeded in this work in a way that was exceeding cross to their pride. And they also

refused

refuſed to own the work becauſe they argued *a priori*; they could not believe that God would do ſuch great things by ſuch a deſpicable inſtrument, one of ſuch poor, mean family in *Manaſſeh*, and he the leaſt in his father's houſe; and the company that was with him appeared very wretched, being but three hundred men, and they weak and faint. But we ſee how they ſuffered for their folly. *Gideon*, when he returned from the victory, *took them, and taught them with the briers and thorns of the wilderneſs, and beat down the tower of* Penuel, *and ſlew the men of the city*, Judg. 8. This in all probability *Gideon* did, as directed by the angel of the Lord, that is Chriſt, that firſt called him, and ſent him forth in this battle, and inſtructed and directed him in the whole affair.

7. That we may be warned not to continue doubting and unbelieving concerning this work, becauſe of the extraordinary degree of it, and the ſuddenneſs and ſwiftneſs of the accompliſhment of the great things that pertain to it; let us conſider the example of the unbelieving Lord in *Samaria*. The prophet *Eliſha* foretold that the great famine in *Samaria* ſhould, in one day, be turned into an extraordinary plenty; but the work was too great and too ſudden for him to believe; ſays he, *If the Lord ſhould make windows in heaven, might this thing be?* And the curſe that he brought upon himſelf by it was, that he *ſaw it with his eyes, and did not eat thereof*;

but

but miſerably periſhed, and was trodden down as the mire of the ſtreets, when others were feaſting and rejoicing, 2 *Kings*, chap. 7.

8. And as perſons will greatly expoſe themſelves to the curſe of God, by oppoſing, or ſtanding at a diſtance and keeping ſilence at ſuch a time as this; ſo perſons who ariſe and readily acknowledge God, who chearfully and vigorouſly exert themſelves to promote this work, put themſelves in the way of the divine bleſſing. What a mark of honour does God put upon thoſe in *Iſrael*, that *willingly offered themſelves, and came to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty?* And what a particular and honourable notice is taken in the records of God's word, of thoſe that aroſe and appeared as *David's* helpers, to introduce him into the kingdom of *Iſrael?* In the 12th chapter of 1 *Chron.* The hoſt of thoſe that thus came to the help of the Lord in that work, is compared to the hoſt of God, ver. 22. And the Spirit of God pronounced a ſpecial bleſſing upon them, as thoſe that were coworkers with God, ver. 18. *Then the Spirit came upon* Amaſai *who was chief of the captains, and he ſaid, Thine are we*, David, *and on thy ſide, thou ſon of* Jeſſe: *peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers; for thy God helpeth thee.* So we may conclude, that God will much more give his bleſſing to ſuch as come to the help of the Lord, when he ſets his own Son as king on his holy hill of *Zion*.

The favourable notice that God will take of such as appear to promote the work of God, at such a time as this, may also be argued from such a very particular notice being taken in the sacred records of those that helped in rebuilding the wall of *Jerusalem*, upon the return from the *Babylonish* captivity, *Neh.* chap. 3.

9. But above all others, is God's eye upon ministers of the gospel, as expecting of them, that they should arise, and acknowledge, and honour him in such a work as this, and do their utmost to encourage and promote it: for to promote such a work, is the very business which they are called and devoted to; it is the office to which they are appointed, as co-workers with Christ, and as his embassadors, to awaken and convert sinners; it is the business they have been solemnly charged with before God, angels and men, and that they have given up themselves to, by the most sacred vows. These especially are the officers of Christ's kingdom, that, above all other men upon earth, do represent his person, unto whom Christ has committed the sacred oracles, and holy ordinances, and all his appointed means of grace, to be administered by them; they are the stewards of his household, into whose hands he has committed its provision; the immortal souls of men are committed to them, as a flock of sheep are committed to the care of a shepherd: it is expected of them, above all others, that they should have understanding of the times, and know

know what *Israel* ought to do; for it is their business to acquaint themselves with things pertaining to the kingdom of God, and to teach and enlighten others therein. We that are employed in the sacred work of the gospel-ministry, are the watchmen over the city, to whom God has committed the stays of the gates of *Zion*; and if, when the rightful king of *Zion* comes to deliver his people, we refuse to open the gates to him, how greatly shall we expose ourselves to his wrath? We are appointed to be the captains of the host in this war: and if a general will highly resent it in a private soldier, if he refuses to follow him when his banner is displayed, and his trumpet blown; how much more will he resent it in the officers of his army? The gospel-ministry, is the principal means that God has appointed for carrying on his work in the souls of men: and it is his will, that whenever that glorious revival of religion, and reformation of the world, is accomplished, it should be principally by the labours of his ministers; and therefore how heinous will it be in the sight of God, if, when a work of that nature is begun, we appear unbelieving, slow, backward and disaffected? There was no sort of persons among the *Jews* that was treated with such manifestations of God's great displeasure, for not acknowledging Christ, and the work of his Spirit, in the days of Christ and his apostles, as the ministers of religion; see how Christ deals with them for it, in the 23d chapter of *Matthew*;

with what gentleneſs did Chriſt treat publicans and harlots, in compariſon of them?

10. If miniſters preach never ſo good doctrine and are never ſo painful and laborious in their work, yet if, at ſuch a time as this, they ſhew their people that they are not well affected to this work, they will do their people a great deal more hurt than good: for the very fame of ſuch a work of God, if their people were ſuffered to believe it to be his work, would be likely to have a greater influence upon their minds, to animate them in religion, than all their labours; and beſides, their miniſters opinion will not only beget in them a ſuſpicion of the work they hear of abroad, whereby the mighty hand of God, that appears in it, loſes its influence upon their minds; but it will alſo tend to create a ſuſpicion of every thing of the like nature, that ſhall appear among themſelves, as being ſomething of the ſame diſtemper that is become ſo epidemical in the land, and that is, in effect, to create a ſuſpicion of all vital religion, and to put the people upon talking againſt it, and diſcouraging it, wherever it appears, and knocking it in the head as faſt as it riſes. And we that are miniſters, by looking on this work from year to year with a diſpleaſed countenance, keep the ſheep from their paſture, inſtead of doing the part of ſhepherds to them, by feeding them; and our people had a great deal better be without any ſettled miniſter at all, at ſuch a time as this.

We

We that are in this ſacred office had need to take heed what we do, and how we behave ourſelves at this time. If we hinder and ſtand in the way of the work of God, whoſe buſineſs above all others it is to promote it, how can we expect to partake of the glorious benefits of it? Thoſe awful words of Chriſt to the *Jewiſh* teachers, ſhould be conſidered by us, *Matth.* xxiii. 13. *Wo unto you, for you ſhut up the kingdom of heaven;—for ye neither go in yourſelves, neither ſuffer ye them that are entering, to go in.* If we keep the ſheep from their paſture, how ſhall we anſwer it to the great Shepherd, that has bought the flock with his precious blood, and has committed the care of them to us? I would humbly deſire of every miniſter that has thus long remained diſaffected to this work, and has had contemptible thoughts of it, to conſider whether he has not hitherto been like *Michal*, without any child, or at leaſt in a great meaſure barren and unſucceſsful in his work; I pray God it may not be a perpetual barreneſs, as her's was.

Miniſters ſhould eſpecially take heed of a ſpirit of envy towards other miniſters, whom God is pleaſed to make more uſe of to carry on his work than they; and that they do not, from ſuch a Spirit, reproach ſome preachers, that have the true ſpirit, as though they were influenced by a falſe ſpirit, or were bereft of reaſon, and were mad, or were proud, falſe pretenders, and de-

ſerved to be put in priſon, or the ſtocks, as diſturbers of the peace; leſt they expoſe themſelves to the curſe of *Shemaiah* the *Nehelamite*, who envied the prophet *Jeremiah*, and in this manner reviled him, in his letter to *Zephaniah* the prieſt, *Jer.* xxix. 26, 27. *The Lord hath made thee prieſt in the ſtead of* Jehoiada *the prieſt, that ye ſhould be officers in the houſe of the Lord, for every man that is mad, and maketh himſelf a prophet, that thou ſhouldſt put him in priſon, and in the ſtocks. Now therefore, why haſt thou not reproved* Jeremiah *of* Anathoth, *which maketh himſelf a prophet to you?* His curſe is denounced in the 32d verſe, *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I will puniſh* Shemaiah *the* Nehemalite, *and his ſeed: he ſhall not have a man to dwell among his people, neither ſhall he behold the good that I will do for my people, ſaith the Lord, becauſe he hath taught rebellion againſt the Lord.*

11. But not only miniſters, but every living ſoul is now obliged to ariſe and acknowledge God in his work, and put to his hand to promote it, as they would not expoſe themſelves to God's curſe. All ſorts of perſons throughout the whole congregation of *Iſrael*, great and ſmall, rich and poor, men and women, helped to build the tabernacle in the wilderneſs; ſome in one way, others in another, each one according to his capacity: *every one whoſe heart ſtirred him up, and every one whom his ſpirit made willing*; all ſorts contributed, and all ſorts were employed in

in that affair, both men and women. And thus it ought to be in this day of building the tabernacle of God: with ſuch a willing and chearful heart ought every man, woman and child, to do ſomething to promote this work; thoſe that have not onyx-ſtones, or are not able to bring gold or ſilver, yet may *bring goats hair.*

* We have an account, how that all ſorts aſſiſted in the rebuilding the wall of *Jeruſalem*, not only the proper inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, but thoſe that dwelt in other parts of the land. And we have an account of one and another, that he repaired *over againſt his houſe*, and of one that repaired *over againſt his chamber.* So now, at this time of rebuilding the walls of *Jeruſalem*, every one ought to promote the work of God within his own ſphere, and by doing what belongs to him, in the place God has ſet him. Man in a private capacity may repair over againſt their houſes; and even thoſe that have not the government of families, and have but a part of a houſe belonging to them, ſhould repair each one over againſt his chamber: and every one ſhould be engaged to do the utmoſt that lies in his power, labouring with the utmoſt watchfulneſs, care and diligence, with united hearts, and united ſtrength, and the greateſt readineſs, to aſſiſt one another in this work; as God's people rebuilt the wall of *Jeruſalem*, who were ſo diligent in the work, that they wrought *from break of day till the ſtars appeared*, and did

not ſo much as put off their clothes in the night; and wrought with that care and watchfulneſs, that *with one hand they wrought in the work, and with the other held a weapon:* and were ſo well united in it, that they took care that one ſhould ſtand ready with a trumpet in his hand, that, if any were aſſaulted in one part thoſe in the other parts, at the ſound of the trumpet, might reſort to them, and help them.

12. Inſtead of coming to the help of the Lord, we ſhall actually fight againſt him, if we are abundant in inſiſting on the blemiſhes of the work, ſo as to manifeſt that we are more forward to take notice of what is amiſs, than what is good and glorious in the work. Not but that the errors that are committed ought to be obſerved and lamented, and the moſt probable means uſed to have them amended; but an inſiſting much upon them, as tho' it were a pleaſing theme, or ſpeaking of them with heat of ſpirit or with ridicule, or an air of contempt, rather than grief for them, has no tendency to correct the errors; but to darken the glory of God's power and grace, and to beget jealouſies and ill thoughts in the minds of others. Whatever errors many zealous perſons have run into, yet if the work, in the ſubſtance of it, be the work of God, then it is a joyful day indeed; 'tis ſo in heaven, and ought to be ſo among God's people on earth. 'Tis a day of great rejoicing with Chriſt himſelf, the good Shepherd, when he

he finds his ſheep that was loſt. If we therefore are Chriſt's friends, now it ſhould be a day of great rejoicing with us. If we viewed things in a juſt light, ſo great an event as the converſion of ſuch a multitude of ſinners, would engage our attention much more than all the imprudencies and irregularities that have been; our hearts would be ſwallowed up with the glory of this event, and we ſhould have no great diſpoſition to attend to any thing elſe. The imprudencies and errors of poor feeble worms do not hinder great rejoicing, in the angels of God, over ſo many poor ſinners that have repented; and it will be an argument of ſomething very ill, if they prevent our rejoicing.

God doubtleſs now expects, that all ſorts of perſons in *New-England*, miniſters and people, high and low, rich and poor, old and young, ſhould take great notice of his hand in this mighty work of his grace, and ſhould appear to acknowledge his glory in it, and greatly to rejoice in it, every one doing his utmoſt, in the place that God has ſet them in, to promote it. And God, according to his wonderful patience, ſeems to be ſtill waiting, to give us opportunity thus to acknowledge and honour him; but, if we finally refuſe, there is not the leaſt reaſon to expect any other than that his awful curſe will purſue us, and that the pourings out of his wrath will be proportionable to the pourings out of his grace, which we have deſpiſed.

PART III.

Shewing many inſtances, wherein the ſubjects, or promoters of this work, have been injuriouſly blamed.

IN treating of the methods to be taken to promote this work, I would, 1. Take notice wherein fault has been found with the conduct of the ſubjects, or promoters of it, beyond juſt cauſe. 2. I would ſhew what things ought to be corrected or avoided. And, 3. What ought to be done to promote it.

Firſt, I would take notice of ſome things, at which offence has been taken without or beyond juſt cauſe.

1. One thing that has been complained of is, miniſters addreſſing themſelves to the *affections* of their hearers, and ſtriving to raiſe their *paſſions*, rather by earneſtneſs in voice and geſture, than by clear reaſoning: by which means, it is objected, the affections are moved, without a proportionable inlightening of the underſtanding.

To which I would ſay, I am far from thinking that it is not very profitable for miniſters, in their preaching, to explain the doctrines of religion, unravel the difficulties that attend them, to confirm them with ſtrength of reaſon and argumentation,

tation, and alſo to obſerve ſome method and order herein: yet I believe the objection made, of affections raiſed without inlightening the underſtanding, is in a great meaſure built on a miſtake, and confuſed notions that ſome have, about the nature and cauſe of the affections, and the manner in which they depend on the underſtanding. All affections are raiſed either by light *in the underſtanding*, or by ſome error and deluſion *in the underſtanding*: for all affections certainly ariſe from ſome apprehenſion in the underſtanding; and that apprehenſion muſt either be agreeable to truth, or not: if it be an apprehenſion agreeable to truth, then it is *light in the underſtanding*. Therefore the thing to be enquired is, whether the apprehenſions of divine things, that are raiſed in people's minds by theſe affectionate preachers, be apprehenſions that are agreeable to truth, or whether they are miſtakes. If the former, then the affections are raiſed the way they ſhould be, *viz.* by informing the mind, or conveying light to the underſtanding. They go away with a wrong notion, that think thoſe preachers can not affect their hearers by inlightning their underſtandings, who do not do it by ſuch a diſtinct handling of doctrinal points, as depends on human diſcipline, or the ſtrength of reaſon, and tends to inlarge their hearers learning, and ſpeculative knowledge in divinity. The manner of preaching without this, may tend very much to ſet divine things in a right view, and to give

the hearers ſuch apprehenſions of them as are agreeable to truth, and ſuch impreſſions on their hearts as are anſwerable to the real nature of things.

* And not only the words ſpoken, but the manner of ſpeaking, has a great tendency to this. An affectionate way of preaching about the great things of religion, has no tendency to beget falſe apprehenſions of them; but a much greater to beget true apprehenſions of them, than a moderate, dull, indifferent way of ſpeaking. Affection and earneſtneſs in the manner of delivery, if it be very great indeed, yet if it be agreeable to the nature of the ſubject, not beyond proportion to its importance, and there be no appearance of its being feigned or forced, has ſo much the greater tendency to beget true apprehenſions in the minds of the hearers, of the ſubject ſpoken of, and ſo to inlighten the underſtanding: and that, for this reaſon, that ſuch a manner of ſpeaking of thoſe things does, in fact, truly repreſent them. If the ſubject be worthy of very great affection, then a ſpeaking of it with every great affection is the trueſt repreſentation of it, and therefore has moſt tendency to beget true ideas of it. Nor are miniſters to be blamed for raiſing the affections of their hearers too high, if that which they are affected with be worthy of affection, and their affections are not raiſed beyond a proportion to their importance or worthineſs.

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I know it has long been faſhionable to deſpiſe an earneſt and pathetical way of preaching; and they only have been valued as preachers, that have ſhown the greateſt extent of learning, and ſtrength of reaſon, and correctneſs of method and language: but I humbly conceive it has been for want of underſtanding or duly conſidering human nature, that ſuch preaching has been thought to have the greateſt tendency to anſwer the ends of preaching. And the experience of the preſent and paſt ages abundantly confirms the ſame. Speculative knowledge in divinity is not what is ſo much needed by our people as ſomething elſe. Men may abound in this ſort of light, and have no heat: how much has there been of this ſort of knowledge in this age? Was there ever an age wherein ſtrength and penetration of reaſon, extent of learning, exactneſs of diſtinction correctneſs of ſtile and clearneſs of expreſſion, did ſo abound? And yet, was there ever an age, wherein there has been ſo little ſenſe of the evil of ſin, ſo little love to God, heavenly-mindedneſs and holineſs of life, among the profeſſors of the true religion? Our people do not ſo much need to have their heads ſtored, as to have their hearts touched; and they ſtand in the greateſt need of that ſort of preaching that has the greateſt tendency to do this.

2. Another

2. Another thing that ſome miniſters have been blamed for, I think unjuſtly, is ſpeaking terror to them that are already under great terrors. Indeed if they go about to terrify perſons with that which is not true, or to affright them by repreſenting their caſe worſe than it is or in any reſpect otherwiſe than it is, they are to be condemned; but if they terrify them only by ſtill holding forth more light, and giving them to underſtand more of the truth of their caſe, they are altogether to be juſtified. When ſinners are awakened by the Spirit of God, it is by light imparted to the conſcience, enabling them to ſee their caſe as it is; and, if more light be let in, it will terrify them more: but miniſters are not therefore to be blamed, that they endeavour to hold forth more light to the conſcience, and do not rather alleviate the pain they are under, by intercepting and obſtructing the light that ſhines already. Why ſhould we be afraid to bring perſons, that are in an infinitely miſerable condition, into the light, for fear it ſhould terrify them? The more we bring ſinners into the light, while the light is terrible to them, the more likely it is that by and by the light will be joyful to them. The eaſe, peace and comfort, that natural men enjoy, have their foundation in darkneſs and blindneſs; therefore as that darkneſs vaniſhes, and light comes in, their peace vaniſhes, and they are terrified: but that is no good argument why we ſhould endeavour to uphold their darkneſs,

neſs, that we may uphold their comfort. The truth is, as long as men do not ſavingly believe, however ſtrict they may be in religion, they have the wrath of God abiding on them; they are his enemies and the children of the devil: and ſeeing this is the truth, they ſhould be told ſo, that they may be ſenſible what their caſe indeed is.

* To blame a miniſter for thus declaring the truth to thoſe who are under awakenings, and not immediately adminiſtering comfort to them, is like blaming a ſurgeon, becauſe when he has begun to thruſt in his lancet, whereby his patient ſhrinks and cries out, he is ſo cruel that he will not ſtay his hand, but goes on to thruſt it in further, till he comes to the core of the wound. Such a compaſſionate phyſician, who, as ſoon as his patient began to cry, ſhould withdraw his hand, and immediately apply a plaiſter to ſkin over the wound, and leave the core untouched, would heal the hurt ſlightly, crying, *peace, peace, when there is no peace.*

Indeed ſomething elſe beſides terror is to be preached to them whoſe conſciences are awakened; the goſpel is to be preached to them. Sinners at the ſame time that they are told how miſerable their caſe is, ſhould be earneſtly invited to come and accept of a Saviour: but this is to induce them to eſcape from the miſery of the condition they are now in, not to make them think it is leſs miſerable than it is, or at all to abate

abate their uneasiness and distress while they are in it; that would be the way to fasten them in it, and not to excite them to flee from it. Comfort, in one sense, is to be held forth to sinners under awakenings of conscience, *i. e.* comfort is to be offered to them in Christ, on condition of their fleeing *from their present miserable state* to him; but comfort is not to be administered to them *in their present state*, as any thing that they have now any title to. No comfort is to be administered to them, from any thing in *them*, any of their qualifications, prayers, or other performances, past, present or future; but ministers should in such cases strive to their utmost to take all such comforts from them. A person that sees himself ready to sink into hell, is ready to strive some way or other to lay God under some obligation to him; but he is to be beat off from every thing of that nature, though it greatly increases his terror, to see himself wholly destitute on every side of any refuge, or any thing of his own to lay hold of; as a man that sees himself in danger of drowning, is in terror, and endeavours to catch hold on every twig within his reach, and he that pulls away those twigs from him increases his terror; yet if they are insufficient to save him, and by being in his way prevent his looking to that which will save him, to pull them away is necessary to save his life.

If sinners are in distress from any mistake they

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are under, that is to be removed: for inſtance, if they are in terror from an apprehenſion that they have committed the unpardonable ſin, ſuch terrors have no tendency to do them any good; for they are from temptation, not from conviction: but that terror which ariſes from conviction, or a ſight of truth, is to be increaſed; for thoſe that are moſt awakened, have great remaining ſtupidity; they have a ſenſe of but little of that which is; and it is from remaining blindneſs and darkneſs that they ſee no more, and that remaining blindneſs is a diſeaſe that we ought to endeavour to cure. I am not afraid to tell ſinners that are moſt ſenſible of their miſery, that their caſe is indeed as miſerable as they think it to be, and a thouſand times more ſo; for this is the truth. Some may be ready to ſay, that though it be the truth, yet it ſeems not to be ſeaſonable then: but it ſeems to me, ſuch truth is never more ſeaſonable than at ſuch a time, when Chriſt is beginning to open the eyes of conſcience. Miniſters ought to act as co-workers with him; to take that opportunity, and to the utmoſt to improve that advantage; and when the light has begun to ſhine, then to remove all obſtacles, and uſe all proper means that it may come more fully. And experience abundantly ſhews, that to take this courſe is not of an hurtful tendency: I have ſeen in very many inſtances, the happy effects of it, and never knew any ill conſequence in caſe

of

of real conviction, and when diſtreſs has only been from thence.

I know but of one caſe wherein the truth ought to be with-held from ſinners in diſtreſs of conſcience, and that is the caſe of melancholy: and it is not to be with-held from them then, becauſe the truth tends to do them hurt, but becauſe if we ſpeak the truth to them, ſometimes they will be led into error by it, through that ſtrange diſpoſition there is in them to take things wrong, unleſs it be ſpoken with abundance of caution and prudence, and conſideration of their diſpoſition and circumſtances. But the moſt awful truth of God's word ought not to be with-held from public congregations, becauſe it may happen that ſome ſuch perſons may be in it, any more than the bible is to be with-held from the Chriſtian world, becauſe it is manifeſt there are many who exceedingly abuſe the awful things contained in the ſcripture, to their own wounding.

* What has more eſpecially raiſed a loud cry againſt ſome preachers, is their frighting poor children with talk of hell and damnation. But if thoſe that complain of this really believe that all are by nature the children of wrath, and heirs of hell; ſuch a cry betrays great weakneſs and inconſideration. As innocent as children ſeem to be to us, yet, if they are without Chriſt, they are not ſo in God's ſight, but are in a moſt miſerable condition as well as grown perſons; and they

they are naturally very ſenſeleſs and ſtupid, being *born as the wild aſs's colt*. Why then ſhould we conceal the truth from them? Will thoſe children that have been dealt tenderly with in this reſpect, and lived and died inſenſible of their miſery till they come to feel it in hell, ever thank their parents for their tenderneſs, in not letting them know what they were in danger of? If parents love towards their children was not blind, it would affect them much more to ſee them expoſed to eternal burnings, and yet ſenſeleſs, than to ſee them ſuffer the diſtreſs of that awakening that is neceſſary in order to their eſcape from them. A child that has a dangerous wound may need the painful lancet as well as grown perſons; and that would be a fooliſh pity, in ſuch a caſe, that ſhould hold back the lancet, and throw away the life.—I have ſeen the happy effects of dealing plainly with children in the concerns of their ſouls, without ſparing them at all, in many inſtances, and never knew any ill conſequence of it in any one inſtance.

3. Another thing that has been blamed, is having ſo frequent religious meetings, and ſpending ſo much time in religion. And indeed there are none of the externals of religion but what are capable of exceſs. But yet this objection of perſons ſpending too much time in religion, has been in the general groundleſs. Though worldly buſineſs muſt be done, and perſons ought not to neglect the buſineſs of their particular callings; yet

it

it is to the honour of God, that a people ſhould be ſo much in outward acts of religion, as to ſhew a great engagedneſs of mind in it, as the main buſineſs of life; and eſpecially at a time when God appears unuſually preſent with a people in wonderful works of power and mercy. And as to the grand objection of, *ſix days ſhalt thou labour*; all that the objectors themſelves underſtand by it is, that we *may* follow our ſecular labours in hoſe ſix days, and *ought* to be diligent in them: not but ſometimes we may turn from them even within thoſe ſix days, to keep a day of faſting or thankſgiving; and that more frequently or rarely, as God's providence and the ſtate of things ſhall call us.

But if the matter be juſtly conſidered, it will be found, that the country has loſt no time from their temporal affairs by the late revival of religion, but rather gained time; and that more time has been ſaved from idleneſs and unprofitable viſits, vain talk, and needleſs diverſions, than has been ſpent in extraordinary religion; and probably five times as much has been ſaved in perſons eſtates, at the tavern, and in their apparel, as has been ſpent by religious meetings.

That the great complaint that is made againſt ſo much time ſpent in religion, cannot be in general from a real concern, that God may be honoured, is very manifeſt from this, that there is a much more zealous outcry made againſt this extraordinary religion, than was before againſt ſo much

much time ſpent in taverns, vain company, and other things, which both waſted our time and ſubſtance, and injured our virtue.

4. Another thing, wherein ſome miniſters have been much blamed, is, for making ſo much of outcries, faintings, and other bodily effects; ſpeaking of them as tokens of the preſence of God, and arguments of the ſucceſs of preaching; ſeeming to ſtrive to bring a congregation to that paſs, and to rejoice in it, yea, to bleſs God when they ſee theſe effects.

Concerning this I would obſerve, in the *firſt* place, that there are many things with reſpect to cryings out, falling down, &c. that are charged on miniſters, that they are not guilty of. Some would have it that they ſpeak of theſe things as *certain* evidences of a work of the Spirit of God on the heart; or that they eſteem theſe bodily effects themſelves to be the work of God, as though the Spirit of God took hold of and agitated the bodies of men; and ſome are charged with making theſe things *eſſential*, and ſuppoſing that perſons cannot be converted without them; whereas I never yet could ſee the perſon that held any of theſe things.

* But for ſpeaking of ſuch effects as *probable* tokens of God's preſence, and arguments of the ſucceſs of preaching, it ſeems to me they are not to be blamed, becauſe I think they are ſo indeed: and therefore when I ſee them excited by preaching the important truths of God's word, urged and

and inforced by proper arguments and motives, or as conſequent on other means that are good, I do not ſcruple to rejoice in them and bleſs God for them; and that for this (as I think) good reaſon, viz. That from time to time, upon proper enquiry and examination, and obſervation of the conſequences, I have found theſe are all evidences that the perſons in whom thoſe effects appear, are then under the influences of God's Spirit. Cryings-out in ſuch a manner, and with ſuch circumſtances, as I have ſeen them from time, are as much evidence to to me of the general cauſe they proceed from, as language: I have learned the meaning of it the ſame way that perſons learn the meaning of language, viz. by uſe and experience. I confeſs that when I hear a great crying-out in a congregation, in the manner that I have heard it, when thoſe things are ſpoken that are worthy of their being greatly affected by, I rejoice in it much more than merely in an appearance of ſolemn attention, and a ſhew of affection by weeping; and that becauſe, when there have been thoſe outcries, I have found from time to time a much greater and more excellent effect. To rejoice that the work of God is carried on calmly, without much ado, is in effect to rejoice that it is carried on with leſs power, or that there is not ſo much of the influence of God's Spirit; for though the degree of the influence of the Spirit of God, on *particular perſons*, is by no means to be judged

judged of by the degree of external appearances, becauſe of the different conſtitutions, tempers and circumſtances of men; yet, if there be a very powerful influence of the Spirit on a mixed multitude, it will cauſe ſome way or other a great viſible commotion.

And as to miniſters aiming at ſuch effects, I ſuppoſe none aim at it any otherwiſe than as they ſtrive to raiſe the affection of their hearers to ſuch an height as often appears therein; and if thoſe affections are good, and it be found by experience, that ſuch a degree of them commonly has a good effect, I think they are to be juſtified in ſo doing.

5. Again, ſome miniſters have been blamed for keeping perſons together that have been under great affections, which have appeared in ſuch extraordinary outward manifeſtations. Many think when any in a congregation are ſo ſeized, that they cannot forbear outward manifeſtations of it, they ſhould be removed, that others may not be diverted.

But I cannot but think that thoſe that thus object go upon quite wrong notions of things: for though perſons ought to take heed that they do not make an ado without neceſſity; yet the unavoidable manifeſtations of ſtrong religious affections are found by experience to have an excellent and durable effect: and ſo to order things, that others may have opportunity to obſerve them, has been found a great means to promote the

the work of God; and to prevent their being in the way of obſervation, is to prevent the effect of that which God makes uſe of as a principal means of carrying on his work at ſuch a time, *viz.* Example; which is often ſpoken of in ſcripture, as one of the chief means by which God would carry on his work in the time of the proſperity of religion in the latter days.

6. Another thing that gives great diſguſt to many, is the diſpoſition that perſons ſhew, under great affections, to ſpeak ſo much, and, with ſuch earneſtneſs and vehemence, to be ſetting forth the greatneſs and importance of eternal things; and to be ſo paſſionately warning, inviting and intreating others.

I am far from thinking that ſuch a diſpoſition ſhould be wholly without any limits or regulation: but yet it ſeems to me, that ſuch a diſpoſition in general is what both reaſon and ſcripture will juſtify. Thoſe that are offended at ſuch things, as though they were unreaſonable, are not juſt: upon examination it will probably be found, that they have one rule of reaſoning about temporal things, and another about ſpiritual things. They would not at all wonder, if a perſon on ſome very great and affecting occaſion, of extraordinary danger or great joy, is diſpoſed to ſpeak much, and with great earneſtneſs, eſpecially to thoſe to whom he is united in the bonds of dear affection. And therefore, if they were juſt, why would they not allow it in ſpiritual things?

And

And much *more* in them agreeable to their vaſtly greater importance and more affecting nature?

We ought not be like the unbelieving *Jews* in Chriſt's time, who were diſguſted both with crying out with diſtreſs, and with joy. When the poor blind man cried out before all the multitude, *Jeſus, thou Son of* David, *have mercy on me!* And continued inſtantly thus doing, *the multitude rebuked him that he ſhould hold his tongue*, *Mark* x. 46, 47, 48, and *Luke* xviii. 38, 39. They looked upon it to be a very indecent noiſe that he made; a thing very ill becoming him, to cauſe his voice to be heard ſo much, and ſo loud. And when Chriſt made his ſolemn entry into *Jeruſalem*, the whole multitude of all ſorts, eſpecially young people, began to rejoice and praiſe God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had ſeen, ſaying, *Bleſſed be the king that cometh in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the higheſt. But the Phariſees* ſaid to Chriſt, *Maſter, rebuke thy diſciples.* They did not underſtand ſuch great tranſports of joy; it ſeemed to them a very unſuitable and indecent noiſe and clamour that they made a confuſed uproar, many crying out together as though they were out of their wits; they wondered that Chriſt would tolerate it. But what ſays Chriſt? *I tell you, that if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the ſtones would immediately cry out.*

7. Another thing that ſome have found fault with, is making uſe of hymns of human compo-

ſure. And I am far from thinking that the book of pſalms ſhould be thrown by in our public worſhip, but that it ſhould always be uſed in the Chriſtian church to the end of the world: but I know of no obligation we are under to confine ourſelves to it. And it is really needful that we ſhould have ſome other ſongs beſides the pſalms of *David:* it is unreaſonable to ſuppoſe that the Chriſtian church ſhould for ever, in her praiſes of God and the Lamb, be confined only to the words of the Old Teſtament, wherein all the greateſt and moſt glorious things of the goſpel, that are infinitely the greateſt ſubjects of her praiſe, are ſpoken of under a veil, and not ſo much as the name of our glorious Redeemer ever mentioned, but in ſome dark figure, or as hid under ſome type.

PART IV.

Shewing what things are to be corrected or avoided, in promoting this work.

HAVING thus obſerved ſome inſtances wherein the conduct of thoſe that have appeared to be the ſubjects of this work, or have been zealous to promote it, has been objected againſt

againſt without or beyond juſt cauſe; I proceed now, in the

II. Place, to ſhew what things ought to be corrected or avoided.

1. If we look back into the hiſtory of the church of God, we may obſerve it has been a common device of the devil to overſet a revival of religion, when he can keep men quiet no longer, then to drive them to exceſſes and extravagancies. He holds them back as long as he can; but when he can do it no longer, then he will puſh them on, and, if poſſible, run them upon their heads. And it has been by this means chiefly that he has been ſucceſsful, in ſeveral inſtances, to overthrow promiſing beginnings: yea, the principal means by which he was ſucceſsful, by degrees to overſet that grand religious revival of the world, that was in the primitive ages of Chriſtianity, and in a manner to overthrow the Chriſtian church through the earth, and to make way for and bring on the great antichriſtian apoſtaſy, was to imploy the indiſcreet zeal of Chriſtians, to drive them into thoſe three extremes of *enthuſiaſm*, *ſuperſtition*, and *ſeverity towards oppoſers*; which ſhould be an everlaſting warning to the Chriſtian church.

Though the devil will do his diligence to ſtir up the open enemies of religion, yet, in a time of revival of religion, his main ſtrength is tried with the friends of it; in his attempts upon them

to miſlead them. And one truly zealous perſon in the time of ſuch an event, that ſeems to have a great hand in the affair, and draws the eyes of many upon him, may do more to hinder the work, than an hundred great, and ſtrong, and open oppoſers.

The errors of the friends of the work of God, and eſpecially of the great promoters of it, give vaſt advantage to the enemies of ſuch a work. Indeed there are many things that are no errors, but are only duties faithfully done, that wound ſuch perſons more than errors : but yet one real error gives oppoſers as much advantage, and hinders and clogs the work as much as ten ſuppoſed ones. Real errors do not fret and gall the enemies of religion ſo much as thoſe things that are ſtrictly right; but they encourage them more, they give them liberty, and open a gap for them; ſo that ſome who before kept their enmity burning in their own bowels, and durſt not ſhow themſelves will on ſuch an occaſion take courage, and give themſelves vent; and their rage will be like that of an enemy let looſe; and thoſe that lay ſtill before, having nothing to ſay but what they would be aſhamed of, when they have ſuch a weapon put into their hands, will fight with all violence. And indeed, the enemies of religion would not know what to do for weapons to fight with, were it not for the errors of the friends of it. And beſides, in real errors, we cannot expect God

God will appear on our ſide, as if our errors were only ſuppoſed ones.

Since therefore the errors of the friends and promoters of ſuch a glorious work are of ſuch dreadful conſequence; and ſeeing the devil is ſo aſſiduous in his attempts with them, and has thereby been ſo ſucceſsful to overthrow religion heretoſore; certainly ſuch perſons ought to be exceeding circumſpect and vigilant, and jealous of themſelves, and humbly dependent on the guidance of the good Shepherd. 1 *Pet.* iv. 7. *Be ſober, and watch unto prayer.* Chap. v. 8. *Be ſober, be vigilant; becauſe your adverſary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about.* For perſons to go on reſolutely, in a kind of heat and vehemence, deſpiſing admonition and correction, is directly contrary to be *ſober*, be *vigilant.*

2. 'Tis a miſtake in ſome, that they think they are in no danger of being miſled by the devil, becauſe they are near to God; and ſo have no jealous eye upon themſelves, and neglect vigilance and circumſpection. They don't think God will leave them to diſhonour him, as long as they keep near to him. And I believe ſo too, as long as they keep near to God in that reſpect, that they maintain an univerſal diligent watch, and avoid ſin and ſnares with diffidence in themſelves and humble dependence and prayerfulneſs; but not merely becauſe they are near to God, in receiving refreſhing views of him; if at the ſame time they are not jealous over their

own hearts, by reaſon of its remaining blindneſs and a ſubtil adverſary. 'Tis a grand error for perſons to think they are out of danger, even in their higheſt ſpiritual joy. However highly we may be favoured with divine comforts, yet, as long as we are in the world, we are in the enemies country; and therefore that direction of Chriſt to his diſciples is never out of date; *Watch and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to eſcape all theſe things, and to ſtand before the Son of man*, Luke xxi. 36. For though God ſtands ready to protect his people, eſpecially thoſe that are near to him: yet he expects we ſhould put on the whole armour of God, that we may ſtand in the evil day: and whatever ſpiritual privileges we are raiſed to, we have no warrant to expect protection in any other way; for God has appointed this whole life, as a ſtate of labour, to be all as a race or battle; the ſtate wherein we ſhall have no need of watching and fighting is reſerved for another world. I have known in abundance of inſtances, the devil has come in, even in the midſt of the moſt exalted frames: it may ſeem a great myſtery; but it is no greater myſtery than that Chriſt ſhould be carried into the wilderneſs, immediately after the heavens had been opened to him, and the Holy Ghoſt deſcended like a dove upon him, and he heard that joyful voice from the Father, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed.* In like manner a Chriſtian is oftentimes carried into a wilderneſs, preſently after

after heaven has been as it were opened to the ſoul, and the Holy Ghoſt has deſcended upon it like a dove, and God has been ſweetly owning the believer, and teſtifying his favour to him as his beloved child.

3. In ſpeaking of the errors that have been, or that we are in danger of, I would

Firſt, Take notice of the cauſes whence the errors that attend a great revival of religion uſually ariſe; and, of ſome errors that ariſe from each of thoſe cauſes.

Secondly, Obſerve ſome errors that have been owing to the influence of ſeveral of thoſe cauſes conjointly.

As to the firſt of theſe, the errors that attend a great revival of religion uſually ariſe from theſe three things; 1. Undiſcerned ſpiritual pride. 2. Wrong principles. 3. Ignorance of Satan's devices.

The firſt and worſt cauſe of errors, in ſuch a ſtate, is *ſpiritual pride*. This is the main door by which the devil comes in. It is the chief inlet of ſmoke from the bottomleſs pit, to darken the mind and miſlead the judgment. This is the main handle by which the devil has hold of religious perſons, and the chief ſource of all the miſchief that he introduces, to clog and hinder a work of God.

I know many things are injuriouſly laid to the pride of thoſe that are zealous in the cauſe of God. When any perſon appears more zealous in reli-

gion, than others, or seems to be distinguished with success, ten to one but those that are about him will suspect that he is very proud of his goodness, and that he affects to have it thought that no body is so good as he. Those that are themselves cold and dead, and especially such as never had any experience of the power of godliness, are ready to entertain such thoughts of the best Christians, from a secret enmity against vital piety.

But then zealous Christians should take heed that this do not prove a snare to them, and the devil do not take advantage from it, to blind their eyes from beholding what is indeed in their hearts.

The corruption of nature may all be resolved into two things, *pride* and *worldly-mindedness*, the *Devil* and the *Beast*: these are the two pillars of *Dagon*'s temple, on which the whole house leans. But the former of these is every way the worst part; it is the first-born son of the devil, and his image in the heart of man chiefly consists in it; it is the last thing in a sinner that is overborn by conviction, in order to conversion; and it is most like the devil its father, in a serpentine deceitfulness; it lies deepest, and is most active, most ready secretly to mix itself with every thing.

Spiritual pride in its own nature is so secret, that it is not as well discerned by immediate intuition on the thing itself, as by the fruits of it; some of which I shall mention, together with the contrary fruits of humility.

4. Spiritual

4. Spiritual pride diſpoſes to ſpeak of other perſons ſins, their enmity againſt God and his people, the miſerable deluſion of hypocrites, and their enmity againſt vital piety, and the deadneſs of ſome Chriſtians, with bitterneſs, or with laughter and levity, and an air of contempt; whereas humility diſpoſes, either to be ſilent about them, or to ſpeak of them with grief and piety.

Spiritual pride is apt to ſuſpect others; whereas an humble man is moſt jealous of himſelf; he is ſo ſuſpicious of nothing in the world as he is of his own heart. He has ſo much to do at home, and ſees ſo much evil in his own heart, and is ſo concerned about it, that he is not apt to be very buſy with others; he complains moſt of himſelf, and cries out of his own coldneſs, and is ready to hope that there is no body but has more love and thankfulneſs to God than he.

* In a contrariety to this, it has been the manner of ſome to ſpeak of almoſt every thing that they ſee amiſs in others, in the moſt harſh, ſevere and terrible language. It is frequent with them to ſay of others opinions or conduct or advice, or of their coldneſs, their ſilence, their caution, their prudence, that they are from the devil, or from hell; that ſuch a thing is deviliſh, or helliſh, or curſed, and that ſuch perſons are ſerving the devil, or the devil is in them, ſo that the words *devil* and *hell* are almoſt continually in their mouths. And ſuch kind of language they will

commonly uſe, not only towards wicked men, but towards them that they themſelves allow to be the true children of God, and alſo towards miniſters and others that are much their ſuperiors. And they look upon it as a virtue and high attainment thus to behave themſelves. *Oh*, ſay they, *we muſt be plain and bold for Chriſt, we muſt declare war againſt ſin wherever we ſee it, we muſt not mince the matter in the cauſe of God, and when ſpeaking for Chriſt.*

What a ſtrange device of the devil is here, to overthrow all Chriſtian meekneſs and gentleneſs, and even all ſhew and appearance of it, under a cloke of zeal and boldneſs for Chriſt! And it is a remarkable inſtance of the weakneſs of the human mind, and how much too cunning the devil is for us!

The grand defence of this way of talking is, that they ſay no more than what is true, but 'tis a grand miſtake to think that we may uſe concerning one another all ſuch language as is according to ſtrict truth. 'Tis really true, that every kind of ſin, and every degree of it, is deviliſh and from hell, and is curſed, helliſh, and condemned or damned. But ſhall a child therefore from time to time, uſe ſuch language concerning an eminently holy father or mother, as, that the devil is in them; that they have ſuch and ſuch deviliſh curſed diſpoſitions: that they commit every day hundreds of helliſh damned acts: and that they are curſed dogs, hell-hounds and devils?

devils? And ſhall the meaneſt of the people be juſtified, in uſing ſuch language concerning magiſtrates, or eminent miniſters? I hope no body has gone to this height; but the ſame pretences of boldneſs, and declared war againſt ſin, will as well juſtify theſe things, as the things they are actually made uſe of to juſtify it. If we proceed in ſuch a manner, what a face will be introduced upon the church of Chriſt? What a ſound ſhall we bring into the houſe of God, into the family of his dear children? How ſoon baniſh that lovely appearance of humility, ſweetneſs, gentleneſs, mutual honour, benevolence, complacence, and an eſteem of others above themſelves, which ought to clothe the children of God all over? Not but that Chriſtians ſhould watch over one another, and in any wiſe reprove one another, and do it plainly and faithfully; but it does not thence follow that dear brethren in the family of God, in rebuking one another, ſhould uſe worſe language than *Michael* the archangel durſt uſe when rebuking the devil himſelf.

Chriſtians, that are but fellow worms, ought at leaſt to treat one another with as much humility and gentleneſs as Chriſt, that is infinitely above them, treats them. But how did Chriſt treat his diſciples when they were ſo cold towards him, and ſo regardleſs of him, at the time when his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful even unto death, and he in a diſmal agony was crying and ſweat-

ing blood for them? One would think then was a proper time, if ever, to have reproved them for a deviliſh, helliſh, curſed and damned ſlothfulneſs and deadneſs. But after what manner does Chriſt reprove them? Behold his aſtoniſhing gentleneſs! *What, could ye not watch with me one hour? The ſpirit indeed is willing, but the fleſh is weak.* And how did he treat *Peter* when he was aſhamed of his Maſter, while he was made a mocking-ſtock and a ſpitting-ſtock for him? Why, he looked upon him with a look of love, and melted his heart.

5. Again, ſpiritual pride often diſpoſes perſons to affect a ſingular way of ſpeaking, or to be ſingular in voice, or air of countenance or behaviour: but he that is humble, though he will be firm to his duty, however ſingular he is in it; yet delights not in ſingularity, for ſingularities ſake; but on the contrary is diſpoſed to become all things to all men, and to yield to others, and conform to them in every thing but ſin. Spiritual pride occaſions a ſtiffneſs and inflexibility in perſons, in their own judgment and their own ways; whereas the humble perſon, though he be inflexible in his duty, and in thoſe things wherein God's honour is concerned; and with regard to temptation to thoſe things he apprehends to be ſinful, though in never ſo ſmall a degree, is like a brazen wall; yet in other things he is of a pliable diſpoſition, ready to pay deference to the opinions of others, to comply with their inclinations,

tions, and has a heart that is tender and flexible, like a little child.

Spiritual pride diſpoſes perſons to affect ſeparation, to ſtand at a diſtance from others, but the humble Chriſtian is ready to look upon himſelf as not worthy that others ſhould be united to him: and though he will not be a companion with one that is viſibly Chriſt's enemy, yet his univerſal benevolence delights in union with his fellow creatures, and will maintain it as much as he poſſibly can, without wounding his own ſoul.

* The humble Chriſtian is as it were clothed with lowlineſs, mildneſs, meekneſs, gentleneſs of ſpirit and behaviour, and with a ſoft, ſweet, condeſcending, winning air and deportment; theſe things are juſt like garments to him, he is *clothed with humility*, he *puts on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering.*

Humility has no ſuch thing as roughneſs, or contempt, or fierceneſs, or bitterneſs in its nature; it makes a perſon like a little child, harmleſs and innocent, and that none need to be afraid of; or like a lamb, deſtitute of all bitterneſs, wrath, anger and clamour.

With ſuch a ſpirit as this ought eſpecially zealous miniſters of the goſpel to be clothed, and thoſe that God is pleaſed to employ as inſtruments of promoting his work: they ought indeed to be explicit in preaching the word of God, without mincing the matter at all; they are not to be gentle

gentle in ſearching and awakening the conſcience, but ſhould be ſons of thunder. The word of God, which is in itſelf ſharper than any two-edged ſword, ought not to be ſheathed by them, but ſo uſed that its ſharp edges may have their full effect, even to the dividing aſunder ſoul and ſpirit, joints and marrow; (provided they do it without judging particular perſons, leaving it to conſcience and the Spirit of God to make the application) but all their converſation ſhould ſavour of nothing but lowlineſs and good-will, love and pity to all mankind; ſo that ſuch a ſpirit ſhould be like a ſweet odour diffuſed around them whereever they go, or like a light ſhining about them, their faces ſhould as it were ſhine with it; they ſhould be like lions to guilty conſciences, but like lambs to mens perſons. This would have no tendency to prevent the awakening of mens conſciences, but on the contrary would have a very great tendency to awaken them; it would make way for the ſharp ſword to enter; it would remove the obſtacles, and make a naked breaſt for the arrow. Yea, the amiable converſation of ſuch miniſters, in itſelf, would terrify the conſciences of men, as well as their terrible preaching; both would co-operate, one with another, to ſubdue the hard, and bring down the proud heart. If there had been conſtantly and univerſally obſervable ſuch a behaviour as this in itinerant preachers, it would have terrified the conſciences of ſinners ten times as much as all the invectives

tives and cenſorious talk there has been concerning particular perſons.

6. Spiritual pride takes great notice of oppoſition and injuries received, that is apt to be often ſpeaking of them, and to be much in taking notice of the aggravations of them, either with an air of bitterneſs or contempt; whereas humility diſpoſes a perſon to be like his Lord, when reviled, dumb, not opening his mouth, but committing himſelf in ſilence to him that judgeth righteouſly. The humble Chriſtian, the more clamorous and furious the world is againſt him the more ſilent and ſtill will he be; unleſs it be in his cloſet, and there he will not be ſtill. Our bleſſed Lord ſeems never to have been ſo ſilent, as when the world compaſſed him round, reproaching, buffeting and ſpitting on him, with loud and virulent outcries.

There has been too much talk of late, among many of the friends of religion, about oppoſition and perſecution. It becomes the followers of the Lamb of God, when the world is in an uproar about them, and full of clamour againſt them, not to raiſe another noiſe to anſwer it, but to be ſtill and quiet. 'Tis not beautiful, at ſuch a times to have pulpits and converſation ring with the ſound of *Perſecution*, *perſecution*, or with abundant talk about *Phariſees*, carnal perſecutors and the ſeed of the ſerpent.

Meekneſs and quietneſs among God's people when oppoſed and reviled, would be the ſureſt way

way to have God remarkably appear for their defence. Nothing is so effectual to bring God down from heaven in the defence of his people as their patience under sufferings. And thus it is that we might expect to have Christ appear for us, if, under all reproaches we are loaded with, we behaved ourselves with a lamb-like meekness and gentleness: but if our spirits are raised, and we are vehement and noisy with our complaints, this will be to take upon us our own defence, and God will leave it with us, to vindicate our cause as well as we can; yea, if we go on in a way of bitterness, and high censuring, it will be the way to have him rebuke us, and put us to shame before our enemies.

Here some may be ready to say, "'Tis not in our own cause that we are thus vehement, but in the cause of God; and the apostle directed the primitive Christians to *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.*" But how was it that the primitive Christians contended earnestly for the faith? They defended the truth with a holy conversation, but gave their reasons with meekness and fear; they contended earnestly for the faith, yea, they resisted unto blood, striving against sin: but the blood that was shed in this earnest strife, was their own blood, and not the blood of their enemies. It was *in the cause of God that Peter* was so fierce, and drew his sword and began to smite with it; but Christ bids him put up his sword again, telling him that they that take

take the ſword ſhall periſh by the ſword. They are the greateſt conquerors in a time of perſecution, who bear it with the greateſt meekneſs and patience.

* 7. Another effect of ſpiritual pride is a certain ſelf-confident boldneſs before God and men. Thus ſome, in their great rejoicings before God have not rejoiced with a reverential trembling, in a proper ſenſe of the majeſty of God, and the awful diſtance between God and them. And there has alſo been an improper boldneſs before men; which is a great error, and quite contrary to ſcripture. There is a fear of reverence that is due to ſome men, *Rom.* xiii. 7. *Fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.* And there is a fear of modeſty and ſhamefacedneſs in inferiors towards ſuperiors, that is amiable, and required by Chriſtian rules. Yet it is well if that very fear and ſhamefacedneſs, which the apoſtle recommends, has not ſometimes been condemned, under the name of a curſed fear of men.

8. Another effect of ſpiritual pride is *aſſuming*: it makes it natural to perſons ſo to act and ſpeak, as though it in a ſpecial manner belonged to them to be taken notice of, and regarded. It is very natural to a perſon that is much under the influence of it to take all the reſpect that is paid him; if others ſhew a diſpoſition to yield him the deference of a preceptor, he is open to it, and freely admits it; yea, 'tis natural for him to expect ſuch treatment, and to take much notice of

of it if he fails of it, and to have an ill opinion of others that do not pay him that which he looks upon as his prerogative. He is apt to clothe himself with a judicial and dogmatical air in conversation, and to take it upon him, as what belongs to him, to give forth his sentence, and to determine and decide. Whereas humility *vaunteth not itself*, and is apt to *prefer others in honour*.

There ought to be the utmost watchfulness against all such appearances of spiritual pride, in all that profess to have been the subjects of this work, and especially in the promoters of it, but above all itinerant preachers: the most eminent gifts, and highest tokens of God's favour will not excuse them. Alas! what is man at his best estate! What is the most highly favoured Christian, or the most successful minister, that he should now think he is sufficient for something, and somebody to be regarded; and that he should go forth, and act among his fellow creatures as if he were wise, and strong, and good!

They whom God has made use of, as it were, to bring up his people out of *Egypt*, as he did of *Moses*, should take heed that they do not provoke God, as *Moses* did. The fruits of *Moses*'s unbelief, which provoked God to shut him out of *Canaan*, where chiefly these two; *first*, His mingling bitterness with his zeal. He had a great zeal for God, and he could not bear to see the intolerable stiff-neckedness of the people, that they did not

not acknowledge the work of God, and were not convinced by all his wonders they had seen: but human passion was mingled with his zeal: *They angred him also at the waters of strife; so that it went ill with* Moses *for their sakes: because they provoked his Spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips*, Psal. cvi. 32, 33. *Hear now, ye rebels*, says he, with bitterness of language. *Secondly*, he assumed too much to himself; *Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch water out of this rock.* His temptations indeed were very great; for he had had great discoveries of God, who had made him the instrument of great good to his church: and they were now too strong for him: which surely should make our young ministers exceeding careful and distrustful of themselves. Alas! how far are we from having the strength of holy, meek, aged *Moses!* And the temptation at this time is exceeding great to both those errors that *Moses* was guilty of: to bitterness and corrupt passion with zeal; there is so much unreasonable opposition made against this glorious work, and so much stiff-neckedness manifested in multitudes of this generation, notwithstanding all the wonderful works of God. And there is also great temptation to an assuming behaviour: when a minister is greatly blest from time to time, and so draws the eyes of the multitude upon him, it is almost impossible to avoid taking upon him the airs of a master, or some extraordinary person; a man had need to have much divine assistance,

ſiſtance, to reſiſt the temptation. But the greater our dangers are the more ought to be our watchfulneſs and prayer, and diffidence of ourſelves. And we ſhould take warning by *Gideon*, who after God had highly favoured him, and made him the inſtrument of a wonderful deliverance for his people, at length made a God of the ſpoils of his enemies, which became a ſnare to him and to his houſe.

Secondly, Another thing from whence errors in conduct, that attend ſuch a revival of religion, ariſe, is *wrong principles*.

* One of theſe is, that whatſoever is found to be of preſent benefit ought to be practiſed, without looking to future conſequences. Some perſons ſeem to think that it ſufficiently juſtifies any thing that they ſay or do, that it is found to be for their preſent edification, and the edification of thoſe that are with them; and therefore they think that they ſhould not concern themſelves about conſequences, but leave them with God. Indeed things that are in themſelves our duty, being required by abſolute commands of God, muſt be done, and future conſequences left with God; our diſcretion takes no place here, but in other things we are to be governed by diſcretion, and muſt not only look at the preſent good, but our view muſt be extenſive, and we muſt look at the conſequences of things. It is the duty of miniſters eſpecially to exerciſe this diſcretion; in things wherein they are not determined by an abſolute

absolute rule, and that are not enjoined them by a wisdom superior to their own, Christ has left them with that general rule, that they should exercise the utmost wisdom in pursuing that which, upon the best view of the consequences of things, will tend most to the advancement of his kingdom.—When we have done our utmost, there will be opposition enough against vital religion, against which the carnal mind of man has such an enmity, as in the apostles days, though he took so much pains to please men, yet, because he was faithful in his work, persecution almost every where was raised against him.

* I know there is naturally a great enmity in the heart of man against vital religion; and I believe there would have been a great deal of opposition against this glorious work of God, if the subjects and promoters of it had behaved themselves never so agreeably to Christian rules; and I believe if this work goes on and spreads much in the world, so as to begin to shake kingdoms and nations, it will dreadfully stir up the rage of earth and hell, and will put the world into the greatest uproar that ever it was in since it stood; I believe Satan's dying struggles will be the most violent: but yet I believe a great deal might be done to restrain this opposition, by a good conformity to that of the apostle *James*, *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom*, Jam. iii. 13.

10. Under

10. Under the head of careleſſneſs of conſequences, it may be proper to ſay ſomething of introducing things new and ſtrange, and that have a tendency by their novelty to ſhock and ſurprize people. Nothing can be more evident from the New Teſtament, than that ſuch things ought to be done with great caution and moderation, to avoid the offence that may be thereby given, and the prejudices that might be raiſed, to hinder the progreſs of religion; yea, that it ought to be thus in things that are good and excellent, provided they are not of the nature of abſolute duty, which though they may appear to be innovations, yet cannot be neglected without diſobedience to the commands of God. What great caution did the apoſtles uſe in introducing things that were new, and aboliſhing things that were old? How gradually were the ceremonial performances of the law of *Moſes* aboliſhed among the Chriſtian *Jews?* And how long did even the apoſtle *Paul* himſelf conform to thoſe ceremonies, which he calls weak and beggarly elements? So it ſeems to have been very gradually that the *Jewiſh* ſabbath was aboliſhed, and the Chriſtian ſabbath introduced. Thus ſtrictly did the apoſtles obſerve the rule that their bleſſed Maſter gave them, of not putting new wine into old bottles, leſt they ſhould burſt the bottles, and loſe the wine.—Theſe things might convince any one, that does not think himſelf wiſer than Chriſt and his apoſtles, that great prudence and caution ſhould be uſed in introducing things into the church

church of God, that are very uncommon, though in themſelves they may be very excellent, leſt by our raſhneſs and imprudent haſte we hinder religion much more than we help it.

11. Thus I have conſidered the two firſt of thoſe three cauſes of error in conduct that were mentioned; I come now to the

Third and laſt cauſe of the errors of thoſe that have appeared to be the ſubjects or zealous promoters of this work, *viz.* a being ignorant or unobſervant of ſome particular things, by which the devil has ſpecial advantage.

And here I would particularly take notice. 1. Of ſome things with reſpect to the inward experiences of Chriſtians: and, 2. Something with regard to the external effects of experiences.

There are three things I would take notice of with regard to the experiences of Chriſtians, by which the devil has many advantages againſt us.

* The firſt thing is the *mixture* there is in the experiences of Chriſtians; whereby when they have truly ſpiritual diſcoveries and exerciſes, they have ſomething mixed, with them beſides what is ſpiritual. The beam of light, as it comes from the fountain of light upon our hearts, is pure; but as it is reflected thence, it is mixed: the ſeed as ſent from heaven, and planted in the heart, is pure: but, as it ſprings up out of the heart, is impure: yea, there is commonly a much greater mixture than perſons ſeem to have

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any imagination of; I have often thought that the experiences of Chriſtians are very frequently as it is with ſome ſorts of fruits, that are inveloped in ſeveral thick ſhells, which are thrown away and but a very ſmall part of the whole bulk is the pure kernel.

* The things, of all which there is frequently ſome mixture, even with great and high experiences, are theſe three: *human or natural affection and paſſions: impreſſions on the imagination*; and a degree of *ſelf-righteouſneſs or ſpiritual pride.* There is very often with that which is ſpiritual, a great mixture of that affection or paſſion which ariſes from natural principles; ſo that nature has a very great hand in thoſe vehement motions and flights of the paſſions that appear. Hence the ſame degrees of divine communication ſhall have different effects, in perſons of different natural tempers. And ſometimes there is not only a mixture of that which is common and natural but even that which is animal, which is in a great meaſure from the body and is properly the reſult of the animal frame. So, in that love that Chriſtians have one to another, very often there is a great mixture of what ariſes from common and natural principles; yea, there may be a mixture of natural love to the oppoſite ſex. So zeal, though it be an excellent virtue, a heavenly flame, when it is pure; as it is exerciſed in thoſe who are little ſanctified and little humbled, is very apt to be mixed with human paſſion,

yea,

yea, with corrupt, hateful affections, pride and bitternefs.

15. Another thing that is often mixed with what is fpiritual in the experiences of Chriftians, are impreffions on the imagination; whereby perfons, together with a fpiritual underftanding of divine things, and a ftrong fenfe of their excellency or great importance, have ftrongly impreffed on their minds external ideas or images of things. A degree of imagination in fuch a cafe, as I have obferved elfewhere, is unavoidable, and neceffarily arifes from human nature, as conftituted in the prefent ftate; and a degree of imagination is really ufeful, and often of great benefit; but, when it is in too great a degree, it becomes an impure mixture that is prejudicial. And it greatly contributes to the other kind of mixture mentioned before, *viz.* of natural affections and paffions.

Another thing that is often mixed with the experiences of Chriftians, which is the worft mixture of all, is fpiritual pride. This is often mixed with the joys of Chriftians: the joy that they have is not purely the joy of faith, or a rejoicing in Chrift Jefus, but is partly a rejoicing in themfelves. There is often in their elevations a looking upon themfelves, and a viewing their own high attainments; they rejoice partly becaufe they are taken with their own experiences and great difcoveries; and this heightens all their paffions, and efpecially thofe effects that are more external.

There is a much greater mixture of these things in the experiences of some Christians than others; in some the mixture is so great, as very much to obscure and hide the beauty of grace in him, like a thick smoke that hinders all the shining of the fire.

* These things we ought to be well aware of, that we may know what to countenance, and what to discourage; otherwise Satan will have a vast advantage against us, for he works in the corrupt mixture. Sometimes for want of persons distinguishing the ore from the pure metal, those experiences are most admired by the persons themselves that are the subjects of them, and by others that are not the most excellent. The great external effects, and vehemence of the passions, and violent agitations of the animal spirits, are sometimes much owing to the corrupt mixture. I have observed a great difference among those that are disposed to be earnestly talking to those that are about them; some insist most on what they behold in God and Christ, the glory of the divine perfections, Christ's wonderful condescension and grace, their own unworthiness, and the infinite obligations they themselves and others are under to love and serve God; others almost wholly on their own high privileges, their assurance of God's love and favour, and the weakness and wickedness of opposers, and how much they are above their reach. The latter may have much of the presence of God, but their experiences

periences are not ſo ſolid and unmixed as the former. And there is a great deal of difference in perſons earneſtneſs in their talk and behaviour: in ſome it ſeems to come indeed from the fulneſs of their hearts, and from the great ſenſe they have of the certainty and infinite greatneſs of eternal things attended with all the appearances of great humility; but in others, their earneſtneſs ſeems to ariſe from a great mixture of human paſſion, and an intemperate agitation of the ſpirits, which appears by their earneſtneſs and vehemence not being proportioned to the nature of the ſubject they inſiſt on, but they are violent in every thing they ſay, as much when they are talking of things of ſmaller importance, as when ſpeaking of things of greater weight. And there have been ſome few inſtances of a more extraordinary nature ſtill, even of perſons finding themſelves conſtrained to cry out, from an unaccountable kind of bodily preſſure, without any extraordinary view of any thing in their minds, or ſenſe of any thing upon their hearts; wherein probably there was the immediate hand of the devil.

* 16. Another thing by which the devil has great advantage, is the unheeded defects there ſometimes are in the experiences of true Chriſtians, and thoſe high affections wherein there is much that is truly good.

* What I now have reſpect to is ſomething diverſe from that defect or imperfection of degree

which is in every holy diſpoſition and exerciſe; what I aim at is, experiences being defective in ſome particular thing that ought to be in them; which though it be not ſuch a defect as renders them utterly vain, and altogether abominable to God, yet ſuch a defect as maims and deforms the experience: the eſſence of truly Chriſtian experiences is not wanting, but yet that is wanting that is very needful in order to the beauty of the image of Chriſt in ſuch a perſon's experiences; things are very much out of due proportion: there is indeed much of ſome things, but at the ſame time there is ſo little of ſome other things that ſhould be, that the defect very much deforms the Chriſtian.

* When this deficiency and diſproportion is great, it is not only a great deformity in itſelf, but has many ill conſequences; it gives the devil great advantage, and leaves a door open for corruption, and expoſes to very unlovely actions, and iſſues oftentimes in the great wounding of the ſoul.

* For the better underſtanding of this matter, we may obſerve, that God, in the revelation that he has made of himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt, has taken care to give a proportionable manifeſtation of two kinds of excellencies or perfections of his nature, *viz.* thoſe that tend to poſſeſs us with awe and reverence; and thoſe that tend to draw and encourage us: by *the one*, he appears as an infinitely great, holy, and heart-ſearching Judge;

by

by *the other*, as a gentle and gracious Father and a loving friend: by the one, he is a pure, ſearching and burning flame; by the other, a ſweet, refreſhing light. Theſe two kinds of attributes are admirably tempered together in the revelation of the goſpel: there is a proportionable manifeſtation of juſtice and mercy, holineſs and grace, authority and condeſcenſion. God hath thus ordered, that his diverſe excellencies, as he reveals himſelf in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhould have a proportionable manifeſtation: he knew it to be of great conſequence, that our apprehenſions of theſe diverſe perfections of his nature ſhould be duly proportioned one to another: a defect on the one hand, *viz.* having much of a diſcovery of his love and grace, without a proportionable diſcovery of his awful majeſty, and his holy and ſearching purity, would tend to ſpiritual pride, carnal confidence and preſumption; and a defect on the other hand, *viz.* having much of a diſcovery of his holy majeſty, without a proportionable diſcovery of his grace, tends to unbelief, a ſinful fearfulneſs and ſpirit of bondage. And herein chiefly conſiſts that deficiency of experiences that I am now ſpeaking of: the revelation God has made of himſelf in his word, is perfect; but the light and communications we have, are not perfect, but many ways exceeding imperfect and maimed. There is a great difference among Chriſtians in this reſpect; ſome have much more general diſcoveries

than others, who are upon many accounts the moſt amiable Chriſtians. Chriſtians may have experiences that are very high, and yet there may be very much of this deficiency and diſproportion: their high experiences are truly from the Spirit of God, but ſin comes in by the defect (as indeed all ſin is originally from a defective, privative cauſe) and in a ſuch a caſe high diſcoveries, at the ſame time that they are enjoyed, may be, and ſometimes are, the occaſion of ſin: and many times the Spirit of God is quenched by this means, and God puniſhes the pride and preſumption that riſes, by bringing ſuch darkneſs, and ſuffering ſuch horrid temptations, as are enough to make one's hair ſtand an end to hear them. Chriſtians therefore ſhould diligently obſerve their own hearts, and ſhould pray to God that he would give them experiences, in which one thing may bear a proportion to another, that God may be honoured, and their ſouls edified thereby; and miniſters ſhould have an eye to this, in their private dealings with the ſouls of their people.

It is chiefly from ſuch a defect of experiences that ſome things have ariſen that have been pretty common of late; as talking of divine things, and expreſſing divine joys with laughing or a light behaviour. The proper cauſe of this has been, that odious defect in their experience, whereby there has been wanting a ſenſe of the awful majeſty of God as preſent with them, and their vileneſs before him, proportionably to the

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ſenſe they have had of God's grace and the love of Chriſt. And the ſame is true in many caſes of perſons unſuitable boldneſs, their diſpoſition to ſpeak with intemperate zeal, and many other things that ſometimes appear in Chriſtians under great religious affections.

* And ſometimes the vehement motion of the animal ſpirits, is owing to experiences being thus partial. I have known in ſeveral inſtances, that perſons have been greatly affected with the dying love of Chriſt, and the happineſs of the enjoyment of him in heaven, and their animal ſpirits have been in great emotion; but in the midſt of it a deep ſenſe of the awful majeſty of God, has at once compoſed them, and quieted animal nature, without diminiſhing their comfort, but only has made it of a better and more ſolid nature; when they have had a ſenſe both of the majeſty and grace of God, one thing has as it were balanced another, and cauſed a more happy ſedateneſs and compoſure of body and mind.

* From theſe things we may learn how to judge of experiences, and to eſtimate their goodneſs. Thoſe are not always the beſt experiences that are attended with the moſt vehement motions of the animal ſpirits, or that have the greateſt effects on the body; nor are they always the beſt that do moſt diſpoſe perſons to abound in talk, and to ſpeak in the moſt vehement manner (though theſe things often ariſe from the greatneſs of ſpiritual experiences:) but thoſe are the moſt excel-

lent experiences that are qualified as follows; 1. That have the leaſt mixture, or are the moſt purely ſpiritual. 2. That are the leaſt deficient and partial, in which the diverſe things that appertain to Chriſtian experience are proportionable one to another. And 3. That are raiſed to the higheſt degree; it is no matter how high they are raiſed if they are qualified as before mentioned. Experiences, thus qualified, will be attended with the moſt amiable behaviour, will bring forth the moſt ſolid and ſweet fruits, and will be the moſt durable, and have the greateſt effect on the abiding temper of the ſoul.

If God is pleaſed to carry on this work, and it ſhould prove to be the dawning of a general revival of the Chriſtian church, the time will come when the experiences of Chriſtians ſhall be much more generally thus qualified. Their diſcoveries will be in a much higher degree; but yet ſo ordered of an infinitely wiſe God, that they ſhall not have ſo great an effect, in proportion, on the body, and will be leſs oppreſſive to nature: and that the outward manifeſtations will rather be like thoſe that were in *Stephen*, when he was full of the Holy Ghoſt, when *all that ſat in the council, looking ſtedfaſtly on him, ſaw his face as it had been the face of an angel.* Their inward fulneſs of the Spirit of God, in his divine, amiable and ſweet influences, ſhall as it were ſhine forth in an heavenly aſpect, and manner of ſpeech and behaviour. But,

* 17. There

* 17. There is another thing concerning the experiences of Chriſtians, of which it is of yet greater importance we ſhould be aware, than either of th e preceding, and that is the *degenerating of experiences*. What I mean is ſomething diverſe from the mere decay of experiences, or their gradually vaniſhing, by perſons loſing their ſenſe of things: it is perſons experiences growing by degrees worſe and worſe in their kind, more and more partial and deficient; in which things are more out of due proportion, and alſo have more and more of a corrupt mixture; the ſpiritual part decreaſes, and the other uſeleſs and hurtful parts greatly increaſe. There is ſuch a thing, and it is very frequent: I have ſeen it in very many inſtances; and great are the miſchiefs that have riſen through want of being more aware of it.

There is commonly, as I obſerved before, in high experiences, beſides that which is ſpiritual, a mixture of three things, *viz.* natural affections, workings of imagination, and ſelf-righteouſneſs or ſpiritual pride. Now it often comes to paſs, that through perſons not diſtinguiſhing the wheat from the chaff, and and for want of watchfulneſs and humble jealouſy of themſelves, and laying great weight on the natural and imaginary part, that part grows, and the ſpiritual part decreaſes; the devil ſets in, and works in the corrupt part, and cheriſhes it to his utmoſt; till at length the experiences of thoſe who began

well come to little elſe but violent motions of carnal affections, great heat of imagination, a great degree of enthuſiaſm, and ſwelling of ſpiritual pride; like ſome fruits which bud, bloſſom and kernel well, but afterwards are blaſted with an exceſs of moiſture; ſo that though the bulk is monſtrouſly great, yet there is little but what is uſeleſs and unwholeſome. 'Tis probable, that many of the hereſies that have ariſen, and ſects that have appeared in the Chriſtian world, with wild enthuſiaſtical notions and practices, began at firſt by this means, that it was ſuch a degenerating of experiences that firſt gave riſe to them.

* There is nothing in the world that does ſo much expoſe to this degenerating of experiences, as an unheeded ſpiritual pride, perſons being conceited of their own ſtock, without an humble, daily, and continual dependence on God. This above all things promotes this degeneracy of experiences, becauſe it grieves and quenches the Spirit of God, kills the ſpiritual, and cheriſhes the natural part, inflames the carnal affections, and heats the imagination.

* By the mixture there is of common affection with love to God, the love of true Chriſtians is liable to degenerate, and to be more and more built on the ſuppoſition of being his high and peculiar favourites. So the joy of Chriſtians by reaſon of the mixture there is with ſpiritual joy, is liable to degenerate, and to come to that at laſt, as to be but little elſe but joy in a perſon's own

own ſuppoſed eminency. So zeal, that at firſt might be in great part ſpiritual, yet through the mixture there is, in a long continuance of oppoſition and controverſy, may degenerate more and more into human paſſion, and may come to bitterneſs, and even to a degree of hatred. And ſo love to brethren may by degrees come to little elſe but fondneſs for a party; yea, through a mixture of a natural love to the oppoſite ſex, may degenerate more and more. Certainly the mutual embraces and kiſſes of perſons of different ſexes, under the notion of Chriſtian love, are utterly to be diſallowed, as having the moſt direct tendency to turn Chriſtian love into brutiſh luſt. I ſhould alſo think it adviſeable, that meetings of young people, of both ſexes, in the evenings, by themſelves, without a miniſter, or any elder people amongſt them, for religious exerciſes, ſhould be avoided; for though for the preſent, while their minds are greatly ſolemnized with lively impreſſions, and a deep ſenſe of divine things, there may appear no ill conſequences: yet we muſt look to the farther end of things, and guard againſt future dangers.

* The defect there ſometimes is in the experiences of Chriſtians, expoſes them to degenerate, as well as the mixture that they have. Maimed experience ſometimes become more and more ſo: the mind being wholly intent upon thoſe things that are in view, and thoſe that are moſt wanting being neglected, there is leſs and leſs of

them, and ſo the gap for corruption to come in grows wider and wider. And commonly both the cauſes of the degenerating of experiences operate together.

18. Thus I have taken notice of ſome things with regard to the inward experiences of Chriſtians, by which *Satan* has an advantage. I now proceed in the

II. Place, to take notice of ſomething with regard to the external effects of experiences, which alſo gives *Satan* an advantage.

* Though it would be unreaſonable, and prejudicial to the intereſt of religion, to frown upon all theſe extraordinary external effects and manifeſtations of great religious affections (for a meaſure of them is natural, neceſſary and beautiful) yet they err who think theſe things ſhould be wholly unlimitted, and that all ſhould be encouraged in going to the utmoſt length they feel themſelves inclined to: there ought to be a gentle reſtraint held upon theſe things, and there ſhould be a prudent care taken of perſons in ſuch circumſtances, and they ſhould be moderately adviſed at proper ſeaſons to hold a reſtraint upon their inclinations; otherwiſe extraordinary outward effects will grow upon them, they will be more and more natural and unavoidable, and the outward ſhow will increaſe, without any increaſe of the internal cauſe; perſons will find themſelves under a kind of neceſſity of making a great

great ado, with leſs and leſs affection of ſoul, till at length almoſt any ſlight emotion will ſet them going; and they will be more and more violent and boiſterous, and will grow louder and louder, till their actions and behaviour become abſurd. Theſe things experience proves.

19. Thus I have taken notice of the more general cauſes whence the errors that have attended this great revival of religion have ariſen, and under each head have obſerved ſome particular errors that have flowed from theſe fountains. I now proceed, as I propoſed, in the

Second place, to take notice of ſome particular errors that have riſen from ſeveral of theſe cauſes; in ſome perhaps they have been chiefly owing to one, in others to another, and in others to ſeveral, or all conjoint. And here the

* 1*ſt*. Thing I would take notice of is, cenſuring others. It is the worſt diſeaſe that has attended this work. The manner of many has been, when they firſt enter into converſation with any perſon, to diſcern him, or to fix a judgment of him from his manner of talking of things of religion, whether he be experimentally acquainted with vital piety or not. So when they have heard any miniſter pray or preach, their firſt work has been to obſerve, whether he prays like one that feels the ſaving power of God's Spirit in his heart, and whether he preaches like

one

one that knows what he says. It has been so much the way in some places, that many new converts do not know but it is their duty to do so. When once persons yield to such a notion, they will quickly grow very discerning in their own apprehensions; and when they have passed their censure, every thing seems to confirm it; they see more and more in the person they have censured, that seems to them to shew plainly that he is an unconverted man. And if the person censured be a minister, every thing in his public performances seems dead; yea, it seems worse and worse to them, his preaching grows more and more intolerable. When the Spirit of God was wonderfully poured out in this place more than seven years ago, and all the town seemed to be alive and full of God, there was no such notion or humour prevailing: when ministers preached here, as very many did at that time, young and old, our people did not go about to discern whether they were men of experience or not, nor did any such thing enter into their hearts; but the business of every one was to listen to what was said, and apply it to his own heart. And scarcely ever did any minister preach here, but his preaching did some remarkable service.

* 20. One that has been supposed to be sufficient warrant for openly censuring ministers, is their opposing this work of God. And there can be no doubt but that opposition may be such, as to render either ministers or people truly scandalous;

dalous; and that miniſters hereby may utterly defeat the deſign of their miniſtry. Nor ſhould I think that any perſon had power to oblige me to attend the miniſtry of one who did from time to time plainly preach againſt this work, or ſpeak reproachfully of it in his public performances, after all Chriſtian methods had been uſed for a remedy, and to no purpoſe.

* But as to determining how far oppoſing this work is conſiſtent with a ſtate of grace, or how far, and for how long time ſome perſons of experience may oppoſe it, through prejudices they have received from the errors that have been mixed with this work, or through ſome peculiar diſadvantages they are under, this is a difficult thing: I have ſeen that which abundantly convinces me that the buſineſs is too high for me; I am glad that God has not committed it to me; I can joyfully leave it in his hands. We may repreſent it as exceeding dangerous to oppoſe this work, for this we have good warrant in the word of God; but I know of no neceſſity we are under to determine whether it be poſſible for thoſe that are guilty of it to be in a ſtate of grace or no. Bleſſed be his name, that he has not laid ſuch a temptation in the way of my pride! I know that in order to be fit for this buſineſs, I muſt not only be vaſtly more knowing, but more humble than I am.

* 21. One thing more I would take notice of before I conclude this part. I believe it to have been

been one fruit of the joyful influences of the Spirit of God, that there has appeared such a disposition to sing praise to God; not only in solemn meetings, but when Christians occasionally met together at each other's houses. But the mismanagement is the getting into a way of performing it without that reverence and solemnity with which all open acts of divine worship ought to be attended. It may be two or three in a room are singing hymns of praise to God, others talking at the same time, others about their work, with little more appearance of regard to what is doing, than if some were only singing a common song. There is danger if such things are continued, of its coming to that by degrees, that a mere nothing be made of this duty, to the great violation of the third commandment. Let Christians abound as much as they will in this holy, heavenly exercise, in God's house, and in their own houses, but when it is performed, let it be performed as an holy act, wherein they have immediately and visibly to do with God.

* What a poor, blind, weak and miserable creature is man at his best estate! We are like helpless sheep; the devil is too subtle for us: what is our strength! What is our wisdom! How ready are we to go astray! How easily are we drawn aside into innumerable snares, while we in the mean time are bold and confident, and doubt not but we are right and safe! we are foolish

foolish sheep, in the midst of subtle serpents and cruel wolves, and do not know it. O how unfit are we to be left unto ourselves! And how much do we stand in need of the wisdom, the power, the condescension, patience, forgiveness and gentleness of our good Shepherd!

PART V.

Shewing positively what ought to be done to promote this work.

1. IN considering the means of promoting this work of God, I have already observed some instances wherein there has been needless objecting; and have also taken notice of many things that ought to be amended. I now proceed in the

Third and last place, to shew positively what ought to be done to promote this work. The obligations that all are under, with one consent, to do their utmost, were observed before. I hope that some, upon reading what was said under that head, will be ready to say, what shall we do? To such I would now offer my thoughts, in answer to such an enquiry.

And that which I think we ought to set ourselves

ſelves about, in the firſt place, is to remove ſtumbling-blocks. When God is revealed as about to come, glorioufly to ſet up his kingdom in the world, this is proclaimed, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make ſtrait in the deſart an high-way for our God*, Iſa. xl. 3. And again, Iſa. lvii. 14. *Caſt ye up, caſt ye up; prepare the way; take up the ſtumbling-block out of the way of my people.* And, chap. lxii. 10. *Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; caſt up, caſt up the highway; gather out the ſtones.*

And in order to this, there muſt be a confeſſing of faults on both ſides; for undoubtedly many are the faults that have been committed. There is hardly any duty more mortifying to the pride of man; but it muſt be done. Repentance is, in a peculiar manner, a proper duty, when the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And if God does now loudly call upon us to repent, then he alſo calls us to make proper manifeſtations of our repentance. I am perſuaded that thoſe that have openly oppoſed this work, or have from time to time ſpoken lightly of it, cannot be excuſed in the ſight of God, without openly confeſſing their fault therein; eſpecially if they be miniſters. If they have, either directly or indirectly, oppoſed this work, or in public or private prejudiced their people againſt it; if hereafter they ſhall be convinced it is of God, they ought by no means to palliate the matter, and excuſe themſelves, and pretend

pretend that they always thought ſo, and that it was only ſuch and ſuch imprudencies they objected againſt: but they ought openly to declare their conviction, and condemn themſelves for what they have done; for it is Chriſt that they have ſpoken againſt, in ſpeaking lightly of, and prejudicing others againſt this work; yea, worſe than that, it is the Holy Ghoſt. And though they have done it ignorantly, yet, when they find out who it is they have oppoſed, undoubtedly God will hold them bound publicly to confeſs it.

On the other ſide, if thoſe that have been zealous to promote this work have in any of the forementioned inſtances gone out of the way, and done that which is contrary to Chriſtian rules, whereby they have openly injured others, and wounded religion, they muſt publicly confeſs it, as they would gather out the ſtones, and prepare the way of God's people. They who have laid great ſtumbling-blocks in others way by their *open tranſgreſſion*, are bound to remove them by their *open repentance*.

Some probably will object, that the oppoſers will take advantage by this to inſult both them and religion. And indeed, to the ſhame of ſome, they have taken advantage by ſuch things. But if there are ſome imbittered enemies of religion, that ſtand ready to improve every thing to its diſadvantage, yet that ought not to hinder an

enjoined

enjoined Chriſtian duty; open repentance, after a fault openly committed.

2. Again, at ſuch a time as this, God does eſpecially call us to meekneſs and mutual forbearance: *Let your moderation be known unto all men: the Lord is at hand.* For us to be judging one another, and behaving with fierceneſs and bitterneſs, when he who is the ſearcher of all hearts, to whom we muſt all give an account, appears ſo remarkably preſent, is exceeding unſuitable. Our buſineſs at ſuch a time ſhould be at home, ſearching ourſelves, and taking heed to our own behaviour. If there be glorious proſperity to the church of God approaching, thoſe that are the moſt meek will have the largeſt ſhare in it: for, when God remarkably *ariſes to execute judgment*, it is *to ſave all the meek of the earth.*

Thoſe therefore that have been zealous for this work, and have erred with their zeal, ought not to be treated with bitterneſs. There is abundant reaſon to think, that moſt of them are children of God; and as to thoſe things wherein we ſee them to be in an error, we have reaſon to ſay as the apoſtle, *If any are otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal this unto them.* Phil. iii. 15. Their errors ſhould not be made uſe of by us to excite indignation towards them, but ſhould influence all of us that hope we are children of God to humble ourſelves and become more intirely dependent on the Lord Jeſus. And

thoſe

thoſe miniſters that have been judged, and injuriouſly dealt with, will do the part of Chriſt's diſciples, not to judge and revile again, but to receive ſuch injuries with meekneſs and forbearance, and make an improvement of them, more ſtrictly examining their hearts and ways, and committing themſelves to God. We have not yet ſeen the end of things; nor do we know who will be moſt honoured of God in the iſſue. *Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof; and the patient in ſpirit is better than the proud in ſpirit*, Eccl. vii. 8.

Contrary to this is each party's ſtigmatizing the other with odious names, which tends greatly to widen and perpetuate the breach. Such diſtinguiſhing names of reproach do as it were divide us into two armies, drawn up in battle array, ready to fight one with another; which greatly hinders the work of God,

3. And as ſuch a time does eſpecially require the exerciſe of forbearance *one towards another*; ſo does it the exerciſe of great patience, in waiting on God, under any ſpecial difficulties and diſadvantages they may be under. The beginning of a revival of religion will neceſſarily be attended with many difficulties of this nature; many parts of the reviving church will, for a while, be under great diſadvantages by what remains of the old diſeaſe. We cannot expect that, after a long time of degeneracy and depravity, things ſhould all come right at once: and to be over haſty and violent,

violent, in such a case, being resolved to have every thing rectified, or else to separate, is the way to hinder things coming right at all, and to break all in pieces. Not but the case may be such as to allow of no delay, without violation of the absolute commands of God: but otherwise, though the difficulty may be very great, another course should be taken. We should have recourse directly to the throne of grace, to represent our difficulties before the great Shepherd of the sheep; and when we have done, should wait patiently upon him, who in his time will appear for our deliverance; but if, instead of that, we are impatient, and take the work into our own hands, we dishonour God, and have reason to fear that he will leave us to manage our affairs for ourselves.

4. What has been mentioned hitherto, has relation to the behaviour we are obliged to, as we would prevent the hindrances of the work; but, besides these, there are things that must be done, more directly to advance it. And here it concerns every one to look into his own heart, and see that the work be promoted in his own soul.

And though I judge not those that have opposed it, yet I would entreat them to leave off concerning themselves so much about others, and look into their own souls, and see to it that they experience a true, saving work of the Spirit of God. If they do not, how can they have any

heart

heart to be buſily and fiercely engaged about the miſtakes of others? I would beſeech them ſeriouſly to weigh the matter with reſpect to this work, and conſider whether, if the ſcriptures are the word of God, the work that has been deſcribed in the firſt part of this treatiſe muſt not needs be, as to the ſubſtance of it, the work of God, and the flouriſhing of that religion that is taught by Chriſt and his apoſtles; and whether any good medium can be found, between owning this work, and being a Deiſt. I would now humbly invite them to come and join with us, and be on our ſide; and, if I had the authority of *Moſes*, I would ſay to them as he did to *Hobab*, Numb. x. 29. *We are journeying unto the place, of which the Lord ſaid, I will give it you; come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath ſpoken good concerning* Iſrael.

As the benefit of improving ſuch a ſeaſon is extraordinary great, ſo is the danger of neglecting or miſemploying it. For as ſuch a time is a time of great favour to thoſe that are partakers of the bleſſing, ſo it is always a time of remarkable vengeance to others. So in *Iſa.* lxi. 2. the ſame that is called *the acceptable year of the Lord, is called alſo, the day of vengeance of our God.* So it is foretold, that at the beginning of the glorious times of the Chriſtian church, as *the hand of the Lord is known towards his ſervants, ſo ſhall his indignation towards his enemies*, Iſa. lxvi. 14. There is no time like ſuch a time for the increaſe of

of guilt, and desperate hardening of the heart; which is the most awful fruit of divine wrath that can be inflicted on any mortal. So that a time of great grace and pouring out of the Spirit, and the fruits of divine mercy, is ever also a time of pouring out divine vengeance, on those that neglect and misemploy such a season.

3. The present revival of religion has an awful aspect upon those that are advanced in years. It has been chiefly amongst those that are young. And indeed commonly, when God has began any great work, he has taken the young people, and has cast off the old and stiff-necked generation. There was a remarkable pouring out of the Spirit of God on the children of *Israel* in the wilderness, on their younger generation, *their little ones, that they said should be a prey*, the generation that entered into *Canaan* with *Joshua*. That generation seems to have been the most excellent generation that ever was in the church of *Israel*. There is no generation, of which there is so much good, and so little hurt spoken in scripture. In that generation, that were under twenty years when they went out of *Egypt*, was that *kindness of youth*, and *love of espousals*, spoken of, *Jer.* ii. 2, 3. 'But the old generation were passed by, and remained obstinate and stiff-necked, and unconvinced by all God's wondrous works that they beheld. Let the old generation in this land take warning from hence, and take heed that they do not continue for ever objecting, murmuring and cavilling

cavilling againſt the work of God, leſt, while God is bringing their children into a land flowing with milk and honey, he ſhould ſwear in his wrath concerning them, that their carcaſes ſhall fall in the wilderneſs.

6. But above all others, does it concern us that are miniſters to ſee that we are partakers of this work, that we have experience of the ſaving operations of the ſame ſpirit which is now poured out on the land. How melancholy is the caſe, when it is otherwiſe! For one to ſtand at the head of a congregation as repreſenting Chriſt, and ſpeaking in his ſtead; and to act the part of a ſhepherd and guide to a people, when many are under great awakenings, and many filled with divine light, love and joy; to undertake to inſtruct and lead them all, under theſe various circumſtances; to be put to it, continually to play the hypocrite, and force the airs of a ſaint in preaching; and from time to time in private converſation, and particular dealing with ſouls, to undertake to judge of their circumſtances; to talk with thoſe that come to him, as if he knew what they ſaid; to try to talk with perſons of experience, as if he had experience as well as they; to force a joyful countenance and manner of ſpeech, when there is nothing in the heart: What ſorrowful work is here! O how miſerably muſt ſuch a perſon feel! What a wretched ſlavery is this! Beſides the infinite provocation of the moſt high God, and diſpleaſure of his Lord and

Maſter. There is reaſon from the ſcripture to conclude, that no ſort of men will be ſo low in hell as ungodly miniſters: for every thing ſpoken of in ſcripture, as that which aggravates guilt, and heightens divine wrath, meets in them.

We that are miniſters not only have need to experience the ſaving influence of the Spirit of God upon our heart, but we need a double portion of the Spirit of God at ſuch a time as this: we had need to be as full of light as a glaſs is, that is held out in the ſun; and, with reſpect to love and zeal, to be like the angels, that are a flame of fire. The times extremely require a fulneſs of the divine Spirit in miniſters, and we ought to give ourſelves no reſt till we have obtained it. And in order to this, I ſhould think miniſters, above all perſons, ought to be much in ſecret prayer and faſting, and alſo much in praying and faſting one with another. It ſeems to me, it ſhould be becoming our circumſtances, if miniſters in a neighbourhood would often meet together, and ſpend days in faſting and fervent prayer among themſelves, earneſtly ſeeking for extraordinary ſupplies of divine grace; and alſo if, on their occaſional viſits one to another, inſtead of ſpending their time in ſitting and ſmoaking, and in diverting, or worldly, unprofitable converſation, telling news, and making their remarks on this and the other trifling ſubject, they would ſpend their time in praying together, and religious conference. How much do many of the common

common people ſhame many of us that are in the work of the miniſtry, in theſe reſpects? Surely we do not behave ourſelves like ambaſſadors of Chriſt! And, while we condemn zealous perſons for cenſuring miniſters, it ought not to be without deep reflections upon ourſelves; for indeed we do very much to provoke cenſoriouſneſs, and lay a great temptation before others. And if we can prove that they tranſgreſs the ſcripture-rule, yet our indignation ſhould be chiefly againſt ourſelves.

* 7. Two things that are exceeding needful in miniſters who would advance the kingdom of Chriſt, are *zeal* and *reſolution*. The power of thoſe is greater than can well be imagined: a man of but an ordinary capacity will do more with them, than one of ten times the parts and learning without them. More may be done with them in a few days, or at leaſt weeks, than can be done without them in many years. The very ſight or appearance of a thoroughly engaged ſpirit, together with a fearleſs courage and unyielding reſolution, in any perſon that has undertaken the managing any affair amongſt mankind, goes a great way towards accompliſhing the effect. But while we are cold and heartleſs, and only go on in an old formal round we ſhall never do any great matters. Our miſery is want of zeal and courage. Hence often, when any thing very conſiderable that is new is propoſed to be done for the advancement of religion,

many difficulties are found out, many objections ſtarted, and it is put off from one to another; but no body does any thing. And after this manner good deſigns have often failed, and ſunk as ſoon as propoſed.

8. And though it may be thought that I go out of my proper ſphere, to intermeddle in the affairs of the colleges; yet I will take the liberty of an *Engliſhman* (that ſpeaks his mind freely concerning public affairs) and the liberty of a miniſter of Chriſt (who doubtleſs may ſpeak his mind as freely about things that concern the kingdom of his Lord) to give my opinion, in ſome things, with reſpect to thoſe ſocieties; the main deſign of which is to train up perſons, and fit them for the work of the miniſtry. And I would ſay in general, care ſhould be taken that thoſe ſocieties ſhould be ſo regulated, as to be in fact nurſeries of piety. Otherwiſe they are fundamentally ruined and undone as to their main deſign and moſt eſſential end. They ought to be ſo conſtituted that vice and idleneſs ſhould have no living there: theſe are not to be ſuffered in ſocieties whoſe main deſign is, to train up youth in Chriſtian knowledge and eminent piety, to fit them to be paſtors of the flock of the bleſſed Jeſus. I have had ſome acquaintance with the affairs of a college: and I cannot but think that it is practicable ſo to conſtitute ſuch ſocieties, that there ſhould be no being there, without being virtuous, ſerious and diligent.

gent. It seems to me to be a reproach to the land, that ever it should be so with our colleges; that, instead of being places of the greatest advantages for true piety, one cannot send a child thither without great danger of his being infected as to his morals. 'Tis perfectly intolerable; and any thing should be done rather than it should be so. If we pretend to have any colleges at all, under a notion of training up youth for the ministry, there should be some way found out that should certainly prevent its being thus. To have societies for bringing persons up to be ambassadors of Jesus Christ, and to have them places of so much infection is the greatest nonsense and absurdity imaginable.

And as thorough and effectual care should be taken, that vice and idleness be not tolerated in these societies; so certainly the design of them requires that extraordinary means should be used in them for training up the students in vital religion, and experimental and practical godliness; so that they should be holy societies, and the very place be as it were sacred: they should be, in the midst of the land, fountains of piety and holiness. There is a great deal of pains taken to teach the scholars human learning; there ought to be as much and more care thoroughly to educate them in religion, and lead them to true and eminent holiness. If the main design of these nurseries is to bring up persons to teach Christ, then it is of the greatest importance that

care be taken to bring thoſe who are there educated to the knowledge of Chriſt. It has been common in our public prayers to call theſe ſocieties *the ſchools of the prophets*; and, if they are ſchools to train up young men to be *prophets*, certainly there ought to be extraordinary care there taken to train them up to be *Chriſtians*.

And I cannot ſee why it is not on all accounts fit and convenient for the governors and inſtructors of the colleges, particularly, ſingly and and frequently to converſe with the ſtudents about the ſtate of their ſouls.

9. There are ſome that are not miniſters, who have great advantages for promoting ſuch a glorious work as this; particularly great men, or men that are high in honour and influence. How much might ſuch do to encourage religion, and open the way for it to have free courſe! But there is commonly a ſhyneſs in great men with reſpect to religion, as though they were aſhamed of it, or at leaſt aſhamed to do very much at it; whereby they greatly provoke the King of kings, and wound religion among the common people. They are careful of their honour, and ſeem to be afraid of appearing forward and zealous in religion, as though it were what would debaſe their character, and expoſe them to contempt. But, in this day of bringing up the ark, they ought to be like *David*, that great king of *Iſrael*, who *made himſelf vile* before the ark; and as he was the higheſt in dignity among God's people, ſo he appeared foremoſt

foremoſt in the zeal he manifeſted on that accaſion; thereby animating and encouraging the whole congregation to praiſe the Lord, and rejoice before him with all their might.

10. But I would now proceed to mention ſome things which ought to be done, that concern all in general.

The firſt thing I ſhall mention is *faſting and prayer*. It ſeems to me, that the circumſtances of the preſent work loudly call God's people to abound in this; whether they conſider the experience God has lately given them of the effuſions of his Spirit, to excite them to pray for the continuance and increaſe, and greater extent of ſuch bleſſings; or whether they conſider how much there is in what we have ſeen of the glorious works of God, to put us in mind of the yet greater things that he has ſpoken of in his word, and to excite our longings for thoſe things, and hopes of their approach; or whether we conſider the oppoſition Satan makes againſt this work, and the many difficulties with which it is clogged, and the diſtreſſing circumſtances that ſome parts of God's church are now under in this land.

When God is about to accompliſh great things for his church, he will begin by pouring out the ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, *Zech.* xii. 10. If we are not to expect that the devil ſhould go out of a particular perſon, without extraordinary prayer, or *prayer and faſting*; how much leſs,

leſs ſhould we expect to have him caſt out of the land, and the world, without it?

I am ſenſible much has been done in duties of this nature, but not ſo much as God in his providence calls for. I ſhould think the people of God in this land, at ſuch a time as this is, would be in the way of their duty, to do three times as much at faſting and prayer as they do; not only for the pouring out of the Spirit on thoſe towns or places whereto they belong, but that God would appear for his church, carry on his work in the land, and in the world, and fulfil the things he has ſpoken of in his word, that his church has been ſo long wiſhing and waiting for. Before the firſt great pouring out of the Spirit of God on the Chriſtian church, the church of God gave themſelves to inceſſant prayer, *Acts* i. 13, 14. There is a time wherein God will wonderfully appear for the deliverance of his church from all her enemies, when he will *avenge his own elect:* and Chriſt reveals that this will be in anſwer to their inceſſant prayers, or *crying day and night*, Luke xviii. 7. In *Iſrael*, the *day of atonement*, which was their great day of faſting and prayer, preceded and made way for the glorious and joyful *feaſt of tabernacles*. When Chriſt is myſtically born into the world, to rule over all nations, it will be in conſequence of the church's *crying, and travailing in birth, and being pained to be delivered.* One thing

thing here intended doubtleſs is, her crying and agonizing in prayer.

11. God ſeems now, at this very time, to be waiting for this from us. When God is about to beſtow ſome great bleſſing on his church, it is often his manner, ſo to order things in his providence, as to ſhew his church their great need of it, and ſo put them upon crying earneſtly to him for it. And let us conſider God's preſent diſpenſations towards his church in this land; a glorious work of his grace has been begun; and God has, of late, ſuffered innumerable difficulties to ariſe, that do in a great meaſure clog and hinder it, and bring many of God's children into great diſtreſs. And yet he does not wholly forſake the work of his hand; there are remarkable tokens of his preſence ſtill to be ſeen; as though he was not forward to forſake us, (if I may ſo ſay) as though he had a mind to carry on his work: but only was waiting for ſomething that he expected in us, as requiſite in order to it. And we have great reaſon to think, one thing at leaſt is, that we ſhould further acknowledge the greatneſs and neceſſity of ſuch a mercy, and our dependence on God for it, in earneſt and importunate prayers to him.

If the people of God, inſtead of ſpending time in fruitleſs diſputing, and talking about oppoſers, and

and animadverting upon the unreaſonableneſs of their talk and behaviour, would be more ſilent in this way, and open their mouths much before God, they would be more in the way of a bleſſing. And if ſome that have been complaining of their miniſters, had ſaid and acted leſs before men, and had applied themſelves with all their might to cry to God for their miniſters, had as it were riſen and ſtormed heaven with their inceſſant prayers for them, they would have been much more in the way of ſucceſs.

12. One thing more I would mention concerning faſting and prayer, wherein I think there has been a neglect in miniſters; and that is, that although they much inſiſt on the duty of ſecret prayer in their preaching, yet little is ſaid about ſecret faſting. It is a duty recommended by our Saviour to his followers, juſt in like manner as ſecret prayer is. There are many occaſions, of both a ſpiritual and temporal nature that properly require it; and there are many particular mercies, that we deſire for ourſelves or friends, which it would be proper in this manner to ſeek of God.

Another thing I would mention, which is of ſtill greater importance, and that is the duty that is incumbent upon God's people to take heed, that while they abound in external duties of devotion, ſuch as praying, hearing, ſinging, there be a proportionable care to abound in *moral duties*, ſuch as acts of righteouſneſs, truth, meekneſs,

meekneſs, forgiveneſs, and love towards our neighbour; which are of much greater importance in the ſight of God than all the externals of his worſhip; this our Saviour was particularly careful that men ſhould be well aware of, *Mat.* ix. 13. *But go ye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice.* And chap. xii. 7. *If he had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not ſacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltleſs,*

At a time when there is an appearance of the approach of any glorious revival of God's church, God does eſpecially call his people to the practice of moral duties. *Thus ſaith the Lord, keep ye judgment, and do juſtice; for my ſalvation is near to come, and my righteouſneſs to be revealed,* Iſa. lvi. 1. So when *John* preached that *the kingdom of heaven was at hand,* and cried to the people, *Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths ſtrait,* as we have an account, *Luke* iii. 4. the people aſked him, *What they ſhould do?* He anſwers, *He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewiſe. The Publicans ſaid, What ſhall we do?* He anſwers, *Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the ſoldiers aſked him, What ſhall we do?* He replies, *Do violence to no man; neither accuſe any falſly; and be content with your wages,* ver. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

13. God's people at ſuch a time as this, ought

ought eſpecially to abound in deeds of charity, or alms-giving. We generally, in theſe days, ſeem to fall far below the true ſpirit and practice of Chriſtianity with regard to this duty.——At a time when God is ſo liberal of ſpiritual things, we ought not to be ſparing of our temporal things.—So far as I can judge by the ſcripture, there is no external duty whatſoever, by which perſons will be ſo much in the way, not only of receiving temporal benefits, but alſo ſpiritual bleſſings, the influences of God's holy Spirit in the heart, in divine diſcoveries, and ſpiritual conſolations. I think it would be unreaſonable to underſtand thoſe promiſes made to this duty in the 58th chapter of *Iſaiah*, in a ſenſe excluſive of ſpiritual diſcoveries and comforts; *Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are caſt out to thy houſe? When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyſelf from thine own fleſh! Then ſhall thy light break forth as the morning, and thy health ſhall ſpring forth ſpeedily: and thy righteouſneſs ſhall go before thee; the glory of the Lord ſhall be thy rere-ward. Then ſhalt thou call, and the Lord ſhall anſwer; thou ſhalt cry, and he ſhall ſay, Here I am: if thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry, and ſatisfy the afflicted ſoul; then ſhall thy light riſe in obſcurity, and thy darkneſs be as the noon-day. And the Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatisfy thy ſoul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and*

thou

thou ſhalt be like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water whoſe waters fail not, Iſa. lviii. 7, &c.

14. Some may object, that for perſons to do deeds of charity, in hope of obtaining ſpiritual bleſſings, would ſeem to ſhew a ſelf-righteous ſpirit, as though they would offer ſomething to God to purchaſe theſe favours. But if this be a good objection, it may be made againſt every duty whatſoever. All external duties of the firſt table will be excluded by it, as well as thoſe of the ſecond. Theſe have as direct a tendency to raiſe ſelf-righteous perſons expectations of receiving ſomething from God on account of them, as thoſe; and on ſome accounts more, for theſe duties are more immediately offered *to God*, and therefore perſons are more ready to expect ſomething *from God* for them. But no duty is to be neglected, for fear of making a righteouſneſs of it. And I have always obſerved, thoſe that are moſt exact in external duties of the firſt table, and ſlack as to thoſe of the ſecond, are the moſt ſelf-righteous.

* If God's people in this land were once brought to abound in ſuch deeds of love, as much as in praying, hearing, ſinging, and religious meetings and conference, it would be a moſt bleſſed omen: there is nothing would have a greater tendency to bring the God of love down from heaven; ſo amiable would be the ſight in the eyes of our loving and exalted Redeemer,

deemer, that it would ſoon as it were fetch him down from his throne, to ſet up his tabernacle with men. I do not remember ever to have read of any remarkable pouring out of the Spirit, that continued any long time, but what was attended with an abounding of this duty. So we know it was in the apoſtles days: and ſo in the late remarkable revival of religion in *Saxony*, which began by the labours of the famous profeſſor *Frank*, and has now been carried on for above thirty years, and has ſpread its happy influences into many parts of the world; it was begun, and has been carried on, by a wonderful practice of this duty. And it is foretold, that God's people ſhall abound in this duty in the time of the great effuſion of the Spirit in the latter days; *The vile perſon ſhall no more be called liberal, nor the churl ſaid to be bountiful.—But the liberal deviſeth liberal things, and by liberal things ſhall he ſtand.*

Thus I have (by the help of God) finiſhed what was propoſed. I have taken the more pains in it, becauſe it appears to me, that now God is giving us the moſt happy ſeaſon to attempt an univerſal reformation that ever was given in *New-England*. And it is a thouſand pities that we ſhould fail of that which ſhould be ſo glorious, for want of our being ſenſible of our opportunity, or being aware of thoſe things that tend to hinder it, or by taking improper courſes to obtain it, or not being ſenſible in what way God expects

expects we ſhould ſeek it. If it ſhould pleaſe God to bleſs any means for the convincing the country of his hand in this work, and bringing them fully and freely to acknowledge his glorious power and grace in it, and engage with one heart and ſoul, and by due methods to endeavour to promote it, it would be a diſpenſation of divine Providence that would have a moſt glorious aſpect, happily ſignifying the approach of great and glorious things to the church of God, and juſtly cauſing us to hope that Chriſt would ſpeedily come to ſet up his kingdom of light, holineſs, peace and joy on earth, as is foretold in his word. *Amen*; even ſo: come, Lord Jeſus!

End of the Seventeenth Volume.

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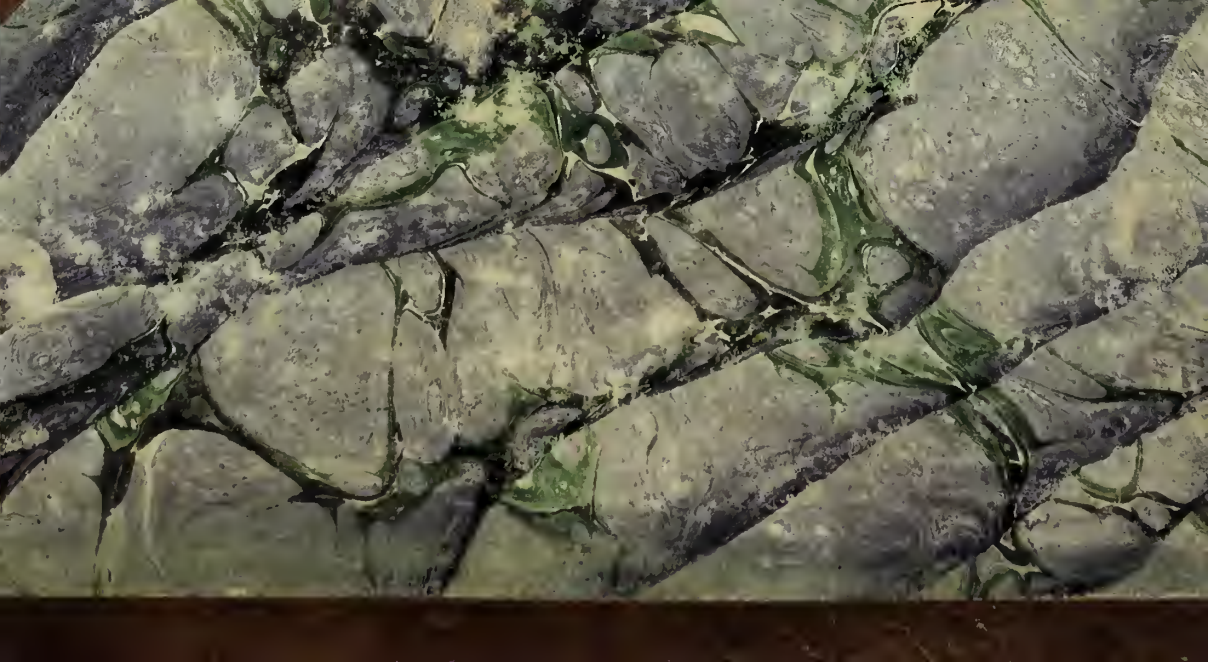
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